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- (73) Proprietor: YEDA RESEARCH AND DEVELOP-
MENT COMPANY LIMITED
P.O. Box 95
Rehovot 76100 (IL)

(72) Inventor: Wallach, David
24 Borochov Street
Rehovot (IL)
Inventor: Engelmann, Hartmut
Joseph-Lutz-Weg 35
D-8000 München 70 (DE)
Inventor: Aderka, Dan
4 Avlivim Street
Holon (IL)
Inventor: Novick, Daniela
40 Hanasi Harishon Street
Rehovot (IL)
Inventor: Rubinstein, Menachem
16 Hatomer Street
Givat Shmuel (IL)

(74) Representative: VOSSIUS & PARTNER
Postfach 86 07 67
D-81634 München (DE)

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15-20/01/89, Napa, California.

Hohmann et al. (1989), ibid., abstract WA143

Description

This invention relates to a novel protein designated Tumor Necrosis Factor (TNF) Binding Protein II (hereinafter TBP-II), salts, functional derivatives, precursors and active fractions thereof and mixtures of any of the foregoing, having the ability to inhibit the cytotoxic effect of TNF and/or to maintain prolonged beneficial effects of TNF. The invention also relates to a process for the purification of said TBP-II and to the substantially purified protein, to its cloning and its production by recombinant DNA techniques. The invention relates also to antibodies against TBP-II and to F(ab) fragments thereof. It further relates to the use of TBP-II, salts, functional derivatives, precursors, active fractions thereof and/or mixtures of any of the foregoing to antagonize the deleterious effects of TNF and/or to maintain its prolonged beneficial effects, and to the use of the antibodies in diagnostic assays or as agents for either inhibiting or mimicking the effects of TNF on cells.

Tumor Necrosis Factor (TNF- α) and Lymphotoxin (TNF- β) (hereinafter, TNF refers to both TNF- α and TNF- β) are cytokines which have many effects on cells (Wallach, D. (1986) in: Interferon 7 (Ion Gresser, Ed.), pp. 83-122, Academic Press, London, and Beutler, B. and Cerami, A. (1987) New England J. Med. 316: 379-385). Both TNF- α and TNF- β initiate their effects by binding to specific cell surface receptors. Some of the effects are likely to be beneficial to the organism: they may destroy, for example, tumor cells or virus infected cells and augment antibacterial activities of granulocytes. In this way, TNF contributes to the defense of the organism against infectious agents and to recovery from injury. But, quite clearly, both TNF- α and TNF- β have also effects which can be extensively deleterious. There is evidence that over production of TNF- α can play a major pathogenic role in several diseases. Thus effects of TNF- α , primarily on the vasculature, are now known to be a major cause for symptoms of septic shock (Tracey, K.J. et al. (1986) Science 234: 470-474). In some diseases, TNF may cause excessive loss of weight (cachexia) by suppressing activities of adipocytes and by causing anorexia and TNF- α was thus called cachectin. It was also described as a mediator of the damage to tissues in rheumatic diseases (Beutler, op.cit.) and as a major mediator of the damage observed in graft-versus-host reactions.

There is therefore a necessity in finding out ways to eliminate or antagonize endogenously formed or exogenously administered TNF. One attempt in this direction was the isolation from human urine of a first TNF Binding Protein called TBP-I and shown to be able to antagonize the effects of TNF. This antagonism was determined both by measuring reduction of the cytotoxic activity of TNF, as well as by measuring interference of TNF binding to its receptors.

The protein TBP-I was first described in our European Patent Application EP 308,378 published on March 22, 1989, in which was disclosed a process for its purification to homogeneity from human urine by chromatography on CM-Sepharose followed by high performance liquid chromatography (HPLC) on Mono Q and Mono S columns and reversed-phase HPLC. The homogeneous TBP-I thus obtained had an apparent molecular weight of about 27,000 in sodium dodecyl sulfate (SDS)-polyacrylamide gel electrophoresis (PAGE) under both reducing and nonreducing conditions. Homogeneity of the purified protein was confirmed by microsequence analysis which revealed a single N-terminal sequence: Asp-Ser-Val-Cys. Partial purification of TNF- α -binding proteins apparently similar to TBP-I was also described by Pro. Brockhaus et al., 2nd Int. Conf. on TNF and related Cytokines (January 15.-20., 1989), Abstract WA 140. Homann et al. (1989), ibid., Abstract WA 143 report on crosslinking experiments with receptor proteins for TNF- α , but do not describe the isolation and purification of such proteins.

TBP-I was shown to protect cells from TNF toxicity at concentrations of a few nanograms per ml and to interfere with the binding of both TNF- α and TNF- β to cells, when applied simultaneously with these cytokines. Further examination of the mechanism by which TBP-I functions revealed that TBP-I does not interact with the target cell, but rather blocks the function of TNF by binding TNF specifically, thus competing for TNF with the TNF receptor.

Consequently to this finding we attempted an alternative approach for the purification of TBP-I, whereby urinary proteins or fractions thereof were applied on a column of immobilized TNF and, after removal of unbound proteins, the proteins which bound to the column were eluted, in bioactive form, by a decrease of the pH. In SDS PAGE analysis, most of the protein in the eluate migrated as a single broad band with apparent molecular size of $30,000 \pm 2,000$.

When applied to further fractionation by reversed-phase HPLC, the proteins eluting from the TNF column showed the presence of two active components: one, TBP-I, eluting as expected at 27% acetonitrile and, in addition, a second TNF-binding protein, eluting at a somewhat higher acetonitrile concentration (31%). This TNF-binding protein is new and is herein called TBP-II. Both proteins provide protection against the in vitro cytoidal effect of TNF and both bind TNF- β less effectively than TNF- α . Although in SDS PAGE analysis the two proteins, TBP-I and TBP-II, appeared to have a very similar molecular size, they could

clearly be distinguished from each other by lack of immunological cross reactivity, differing N-terminal amino acid sequences and differing amino acid composition.

The present invention provides a TNF-Binding Protein, herein designated TBP-II, salts, functional derivatives, precursors and active fractions thereof and mixtures of any of the foregoing, which binds TNF specifically and can antagonize the deleterious effects of TNF and/or maintain its prolonged beneficial effects. The antagonism to TNF is determined by selectively measuring reduction of cytotoxic activity of TNF, but not of other compounds having some activities similar to TNF, such as human interleukin-1 (IL-1).

The invention is directed to said TBP-II in substantially purified form, being free of proteinaceous impurities and moving as a single peak on reversed HPLC.

10 The invention also relates to a process for the purification of TBP-II from human fluids, such as urine. Another object of the invention is the production of TBP-II by recombinant DNA techniques, including the preparation of DNA sequences coding for TBP-II or for a protein substantially homologous therewith, the construction of expression vehicles comprising them and of host cells transformed therewith, and the culture of said transformant cells in a suitable culture medium in order to produce recombinant TBP-II or a protein substantially homologous therewith.

15 A further object of the invention is to provide antibodies specific for TBP-II and F(ab) fragments thereof, which may be used in diagnostics as well as in pharmaceuticals both for inhibiting toxic effects of TNF and for mimicking TNF beneficial effects on cells.

20 The TBP-II of the invention and its salts, functional derivatives, precursors and active fractions thereof, and mixtures of any of the foregoing, are for use as active ingredients of pharmaceutical compositions to protect mammals against the deleterious effects of TNF and/or to maintain its prolonged beneficial effects, when used together with TNF.

The figures show:

25 Figure 1 shows the elution pattern of urinary TNF binding proteins on a reversed-phase HPLC column.

Figure 2 shows SDS-PAGE analysis of the crude and purified preparations of TBP-I and TBP-II.

Figure 3 depicts the sequences of several tryptic peptides of TBP-II.

Figure 4 shows ELISA for the binding of antisera against TBP-I and TBP-II for the two species of TBP.

Figure 5 shows the inhibition of the binding of TNF to different cell lines with antisera to TBP-I and TBP-II.

30 Figure 6 shows the levels of TBP-II in the sera of healthy individuals and of systemic lupus erythematosus (SLE) patients.

Figure 7 shows the effects of different concentrations of TBP-II in maintaining prolonged beneficial function of TNF as stimulator of fibroblast growth (FS11 cells).

Figure 8 shows the time-related effects of TBP-II on TNF bioactivity.

35 The present invention provides TNF Binding Protein TBP-II, salts, functional derivatives, precursors and active fractions thereof, and mixtures of any of the foregoing, which selectively inhibit the cytotoxic effect of TNF and/or maintain its prolonged beneficial effects.

It was found according to the present invention that TBP-II is able to inhibit the cytotoxic activity of TNF and thus the inhibition of the cytotoxic effects of TNF by TBP-II is encompassed by the present invention. It 40 was further found that TBP-II has an additional role as a specific carrier which binds TNF and maintains its prolonged beneficial effects. Thus, the complex TBP-II bound-TNF may act as a reservoir which provides a sustained release of active TNF to target cells. This aspect is also encompassed by the present invention, including the use of TBP-II in low amounts together with TNF, to promote prolonged beneficial effects of TNF, such as antitumor, antiviral, antibacterial, antiparasitic, or fibroblast growth stimulating activity. In this 45 case, the mixture may have several clinical applications, such as promotion of wound healing.

The TBP-II of the invention was isolated from human urine. The substantially purified protein, which is substantially free of proteinaceous impurities, has a molecular weight of about 30 kDa when analyzed by SDS PAGE under reducing conditions and it moves as a single peak on reversed-phase HPLC. Its activity is determined by its ability to inhibit the cytotoxic effect of TNF- α on murine A9 cells.

50 TBP-II is further characterized by the following sequence obtained by N-terminal sequence analysis of the protein:

Ala-Gln-Val-Ala-Phe-Thr-Pro-Tyr-Ala-Pro-Glu-Pro-Gly-Ser-Thr-Cys-Arg-Leu-Arg-

55 Glu-Tyr-Tyr-Asp-Gln-Thr-Ala-Gln-Met-Cys-Cys-

In fact, a heterogeneity of N-terminal sequences could be observed in the sample of TBP-II, and in all experiments truncated forms of this sequence could be discerned. The amounts of the different truncated sequences and the ratio to each other varied from batch to batch. Thus together with the above sequence, one could discern a sequence shorter by five amino acids:

5 Thr-Pro-Tyr-Ala-Pro-Glu-Pro-Gly-Ser-Thr....

and a sequence which lacked just four of the terminal amino acids:

6 Phe-Thr-Pro-Tyr-Ala-Pro-Glu-Pro-Gly-Ser-Thr....

The present invention encompasses a protein comprising the above sequence, herein referred to as TBP-II, as well as any other polypeptide in which one or more amino acids in the structure of natural TBP-II are deleted or replaced with other amino acids, or one or more amino acids are added thereto, as long as they have human TBP-II activity.

This invention also relates to a process for isolating TBP-II from a human fluid, e.g. urine, and its purification. In one preferred embodiment, the substantially purified protein of the invention is produced by a process which comprises:

- 15 a) recovering the crude protein fraction from a dialized concentrate of human urine of healthy patients;
- b) subjecting said crude protein fraction of step (a) to affinity purification on a column of immobilized TNF;
- c) applying said affinity purified active TNF Binding Proteins from step (b) to reversed-phase HPLC to obtain substantially purified active fractions of the TNF Binding Proteins, defined by their ability to inhibit the cytotoxic effect of TNF;
- 20 d) separating the substantially purified proteins of step (c) having a molecular weight of about 30 kDa on SDS PAGE under reducing conditions, moving as a single peak on reversed-phase HPLC and having the ability to inhibit the cytotoxic effect of TNF; and
- e) recovering the fractions eluting at 31% acetonitrile and containing substantially purified TBP-II.

25 The invention further relates to the preparation of TBP-II by genetic engineering techniques and encompasses all the tools used in these techniques. Thus the invention concerns DNA molecules comprising the nucleotide sequence coding for TBP-II or for a protein substantially homologous therewith. These DNA molecules may be genomic DNA, cDNA, synthetic DNA and combinations thereof.

30 The cloning of TBP-II may be carried out by different techniques. According to one approach, specific antibodies (polyclonal or monoclonal) to TBP-II are produced and used to search for cells producing TBP-II by immunofluorescence or by Western blot. Then, mRNA is extracted from these TBP-II producing cells and is converted to cDNA by contacting with reverse transcriptase for a time and under conditions suitable to form said cDNA. The cDNA is cloned in an expression vector such as lambda gt 11, and screened by the use of the antibodies. The lambda gt 11 expression vector can be used for insertion of DNA up to 7 kb in length at a unique EcoRI site 53 bases upstream from the β -galactosidase termination codon. Therefore, foreign sequences DNA may be inserted into this site and expressed under appropriate conditions as fusion proteins. The lambda gt 11 expression vector is particularly useful for the construction of cDNA libraries to be screened with antibody probes (Huynh, T.V. et al. in: David Glover (ed.), DNA Cloning Techniques: A Practical Approach, IRL Press, Oxford (1984) pp. 49-78).

35 Following another approach, a synthetic oligonucleotide or a mixture of synthetic oligonucleotides, whose sequence is derived from the amino acid sequence of a fragment of the protein, e.g., the N-terminal amino acid sequence, are produced and used as probes for cloning the cDNA or the genomic DNA coding for TBP-II. Suitable DNA preparations, such as human genomic DNA, are enzymatically cleaved by restriction enzymes, or randomly sheared, and the fragments inserted into appropriate recombinant vectors to form a gene library. Such vectors can then be screened with synthetic oligonucleotide probes in order to identify a sequence coding for TBP-II.

40 Alternatively, the mRNA is isolated from cells which express TBP-II and is converted, after purification, to cDNA as described above. The cDNA is converted to double-stranded cDNA by known techniques, is cloned and the resulting clones are screened with an appropriate probe for cDNA coding for the desired sequences. Once the desired clone is isolated, the cDNA is manipulated in substantially the same manner as the genomic DNA. However, with cDNA there will be no introns or intervening sequences.

45 The invention also relates to synthetic oligonucleotides to be used as probes to the DNA coding for TBP-II. They are synthesized by known methods on the basis of the amino acid sequence of fragments of TBP-II. For this purpose, it is possible either to perform sequence analysis of the intact TBP-II or to obtain peptide fragments thereof and to characterize their amino acid sequence. The peptide fragments are obtained by subjecting purified protein preparations to fragmentation, e.g. by digestion with proteases such as trypsin, chymotrypsin or papain by methods well known in the art (Oike, Y. et al. (1982) J. Biol. Chem. 257:9751-9758), they are separated by reverse phase HPLC and sequenced by automatic amino acid

sequencing techniques.

Once one or more suitable peptide fragments have been sequenced or a partial sequence of the protein is determined, the DNA sequences capable of encoding them are examined. Due to the degeneration of the genetic code, more than one codon may be used to encode a particular amino acid and one or more different oligonucleotides can be produced, each of which would be capable of encoding the TBP-II peptide fragments (Watson, J.D., in: Molecular Biology of the Gene, 3rd ed., W.A. Benjamin, Inc. Menlo Park, CA 5 (1977), pp. 356-357). However, only one member of the set contains the nucleotide sequence that is identical to the nucleotide sequence of the gene. Its presence within the set and its capability to hybridize to DNA even in the presence of the other members of the set, makes it possible to employ the 10 unfractionated set of oligonucleotides in the same manner in which one would employ a single oligonucleotide to clone the gene that encodes the peptide. The use of such oligonucleotide or set of oligonucleotides containing the theoretical "most probable" sequence capable of encoding the TBP-II gene fragments (following the "codon usage rules" disclosed by Lathe, R., et al. (1985) *J. Molec. Biol.* 183:1-12) permits to identify the sequence of a complementary oligonucleotide or set of oligonucleotides which is 15 capable of hybridizing to the "most probable" sequence encoding the TBP-II or at least a portion thereof, or a set of such sequences. This oligonucleotide containing such a complementary sequence is then synthesized and employed as a probe to identify and isolate a DNA molecule coding for the TBP-II of the invention from a DNA library (Maniatis, T. et al. Molecular Cloning: A Laboratory Manual, Cold Spring Harbor Press, Cold Spring Harbor, NY (1982)).

20 In one of the embodiments, the isolation of the gene of TBP-II is done by colony hybridization techniques under stringent conditions. Procedures for hybridization of nucleic acids are common knowledge and are disclosed, for example, in Maniatis, T., Molecular Cloning: A Laboratory Manual, op. cit. and in Haymes, B.T., et al., Nucleic Acid Hybridization: A Practical Approach, IRL Press, Oxford, England (1985). By hybridization with the above nucleotide or set of oligonucleotides probes, it is possible to identify in a cDNA or genomic library, the DNA sequences capable of such hybridization and they are then analyzed to 25 determine to what extent they contain encoding sequences for the TBP-II of the invention.

The DNA of positive clones is then inserted into appropriately constructed expression vectors by 30 techniques well known in the art (see Maniatis et al., op cit.). Double-stranded cDNA is linked to plasmid vectors by homopolymeric tailing or by restriction linking involving the use of synthetic DNA linkers or blunt-ended ligation techniques. DNA ligases are used to ligate the DNA molecules and undesirable joining is avoided by treatment with alkaline phosphatase.

For expression of the desired protein, the expression vector should comprise also specific nucleotide 35 sequences containing transcriptional and translational regulatory information linked to the DNA coding for the desired protein in such a way as to permit gene expression and production of the protein. First, in order for the gene to be transcribed, it must be preceded by a promoter recognizable by RNA polymerase, to which the polymerase binds and thus initiates the transcription process. There are a variety of such promoters in use, which work with different efficiencies (strong and weak promoters) and are different for prokaryotic and eukaryotic cells. High levels of gene expression in prokaryotic cells are achieved by using 40 ribosome-binding sites, such as the Shine-Dalgarno sequence (SD sequence). For eukaryotic hosts, different transcriptional and translational regulatory sequences may be employed, depending on the nature of the host. They may be derived from viral sources, such as adenovirus, bovine papilloma virus, Simian 45 virus, or the like, where the regulatory signals are associated with a particular gene which has a high level of expression. Examples are the TK promoter of Herpes virus, the SV40 early promoter, the yeast ga14 gene promoter, etc. Transcriptional initiation regulatory signals may be selected which allow for repression and activation, so that expression of the genes can be modulated.

The DNA molecule comprising the nucleotide sequence coding for a protein comprising the amino acid sequence of the TBP-II of the invention preceded by a nucleotide sequence of a signal peptide and the operably linked transcriptional and translational regulatory signals is inserted into a vector which is capable of integrating the desired gene sequences into the host cell chromosome. The cells which have stably 50 integrated the introduced DNA into their chromosomes can be selected by also introducing one or more markers which allow for selection of host cells which contain the expression vector.

In a preferred embodiment, the introduced DNA molecule will be incorporated into a plasmid or viral vector capable of autonomous replication in the recipient host. Prokaryotic and eukaryotic plasmids are well-known from the literature. Factors of importance in selecting a particular plasmid or viral vector include 55 the ease with which recipient cells that contain the vector may be recognized and selected from those recipient cells which do not contain the vector; the number of copies of the vector which are desired in a particular host; and whether it is desirable to be able to "shuttle" the vector between host cells of different species.

Once the vector or DNA sequence containing the construct(s) has been prepared for expression, the DNA construct(s) may be introduced into an appropriate host cell by any of a variety of suitable means: transformation, transfection, conjugation, protoplast fusion, electroporation, calcium phosphate-precipitation, direct microinjection, etc. Host cells to be used in this invention may be either prokaryotic or eukaryotic.

- 5 Preferred prokaryotic hosts include bacteria such as E. coli, Bacillus, Streptomyces, Pseudomonas, Salmonella, Serratia, etc. The most preferred prokaryotic host is E. coli. Under such conditions, the protein will not be glycosylated. The prokaryotic host must be compatible with the replicon and control sequences in the expression plasmid. Preferred eukaryotic hosts are mammalian cells, e.g., human, monkey, mouse and chinese hamster ovary (CHO) cells, because they provide post-translational modifications to protein molecules, including correct folding or glycosylation at correct sites. Also yeast cells can carry out post-translational peptide modifications, including glycosylation.

10 After the introduction of the vector, the host cells are grown in a selective medium, which selects for the growth of vector-containing cells. Expression of the cloned gene sequence(s) results in the production of the desired TBP-II or a fragment thereof. The expressed protein is then isolated and purified in accordance 15 with the purification method described in the present application or by any other conventional procedure involving extraction, precipitation, chromatography, electrophoresis, or the like.

15 A further purification procedure that may be used in preference for purifying the protein of the invention is affinity chromatography using anti-TBP-II monoclonal antibodies, which are produced and immobilized on a gel matrix contained within a column. Impure preparations containing the recombinant protein are passed 20 through the column. The protein will be bound to the column by the specific antibody while the impurities will pass through. After washing, the protein is eluted from the gel by a change in pH or ionic strength.

25 As used herein the term 'salts' refers to both salts of carboxyl groups and to acid addition salts of amino groups of the protein molecule formed by means known in the art. Salts of a carboxyl group include inorganic salts, for example, sodium, calcium, and salts with organic bases as those formed, for example, with amines, such as triethanolamine, arginine or lysine. Acid addition salts include, for example, salts with mineral acids and salts with organic acids.

30 "Functional derivatives" as used herein covers derivatives which may be prepared from the functional groups which occur as side chains on the residues or the N- or C-terminal groups, by means known in the art, and are included in the invention as long as they remain pharmaceutically acceptable, i.e. they do not 35 destroy the activity of the protein and do not confer toxic properties on compositions containing it. These derivatives include aliphatic esters or amides of the carboxyl groups, and N-acyl derivatives of free amino groups or O-acyl derivatives of free hydroxyl groups formed with acyl moieties (e.g. alkanoyl or carbocyclic aroyl groups).

35 "Precursors" are compounds formed prior to, and converted into, TBP-II in the animal or human body. As "active fractions" of the substantially purified protein, the present invention covers any fragment or precursors of the polypeptide chain of the protein molecule alone or together with associated molecules or residues linked thereto, e.g. sugar or phosphate residues, or aggregates of the protein molecule or the sugar residues by themselves, provided said fraction has the ability to inhibit the cytotoxic effect of TNF on 40 cells and/or to maintain its prolonged beneficial effect.

40 The invention further relates to antibodies against TBP-II and to F(ab) fragments thereof, and to salts functional derivatives and/or active fractions (as hereinbefore defined) thereof. These antibodies provide a new approach for the modulation of the TNF activity, and may be used both to inhibit and to mimic effects of TNF on specific subsets of cells, depending on the molecular form of the antibodies, specifically on their valence: monovalent forms of the antibodies (e.g. F(ab) fragments) being inhibitory and multivalent forms 45 being able to mimic at least part of the effects of TNF. They are, thus, suitable as pharmaceutical agents both for mimicking and blocking TNF effects on cells.

45 The functional interaction of the antibodies of the present invention with TBP-II provides also a new diagnostic tool, based on immunoassays such as radioimmunoassay, ELISA etc., for the detection of over- or under-production of TBP-II by cells in the body in certain disorders. Thus, the level of TBP-II in sera of patients with different types of cancer or suffering from autoimmune disorders, such as systemic lupus erythematosus (SLE), can be determined this way. In an inverse approach, antibodies against TBP-II, when produced endogenously in the body, will be measured with the use of purified TBP-II. Detecting such autoantibodies, when formed in certain autoimmune disorders, is of extreme importance, since their ability to mimic or inhibit the effects of TNF surely has far-reaching bearing on the pathological syndromes of said 55 disorders.

The antibodies may be either polyclonal or monoclonal. They may be raised in rabbits, mice or other animals or tissue cultured cells derived thereof or can be products of cells of human origin. They may also be produced by recombinant DNA technology either in a form identical to that of the native antibody or as

chimeric molecules, constructed by recombination of antibody molecules of man and animal origins or in other forms chosen to make the antibodies most suitable for use in therapy.

For the preparation of the antibodies, either purified TBP-II or one or more synthetic peptides identical to the known sequence of a fragment thereof, e.g. to the N-terminal protein sequence, may be used to immunize animals. A further possibility is to fuse one of the possible nucleotide sequences coding for a fragment of TBP-II to the gene coding for Protein A, to express the fused Protein A-TBP-II gene in *E. coli*, to purify the fused protein by affinity chromatography on IgG Sepharose column and then to use it to immunize animals.

The monoclonal antibodies of the present invention are prepared using conventional hybridoma technique (Kohler et al. (1975) *Nature* 256:495; Kohler et al. (1976) *Eur. J. Immunol.* 6:511). After immunization, spleen cells alone or together with lymph node cells of the immunized animals are isolated and fused with a suitable myeloma cell line. After fusion, the resulting hybridomas cells are selectively maintained in HAT medium and then cloned. The hybridoma cells obtained through such a selection are then assayed to identify clones which secrete antibodies capable of binding TBP-II. After identification, the desired clones are grown in bulk, either in suspension culture or in ascitic fluid, by injecting the cells into the peritoneum of suitable host mice. The monoclonal antibodies produced by the hybridomas are then isolated and purified.

As mentioned before, the monoclonal antibodies may also be immobilized and used for the purification of the TBP-II in affinity purification procedure using an immunoabsorbent column.

The TBP-II and salts, functional derivatives, precursors and active fractions thereof and mixtures of any of the foregoing, are indicated for antagonizing the deleterious effects of TNF in mammals, i.e. for treating conditions wherein excess of TNF is formed endogenously or is exogenously administered. They are also indicated, in low amounts and in mixture with TNF, as carriers for prolonging beneficial effects of TNF.

The present invention further relates to pharmaceutical compositions comprising a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier and the TBP-II of the invention or its salts, functional derivatives, precursors or active fractions thereof or mixtures of any of the foregoing, as active ingredient wherein said fractions have the ability to inhibit the cytotoxic effect of TNF on cells and/or to maintain its prolonged beneficial effect. These compositions may be used in any condition where there is an over production of endogenous TNF, such as in cases of septic shock, cachexia, graft-versus host reactions, autoimmune diseases like rheumatoid arthritis, etc. The way of administration can be via any of the accepted modes of administration for similar agents and will depend on the condition to be treated, e.g., intravenously in case of septic shock or local injection in case of rheumatoid arthritis (for example, into the knee), or continuously by infusion, etc. The compositions may also be used in cases of TNF intoxication caused by exogenous administration of excessive amounts (overdoses) of TNF. The compositions may comprise also TNF, in which case it will release TNF in a controlled manner for a prolonged time.

The pharmaceutical compositions of the invention are prepared for administration by mixing the protein or its derivatives with physiologically acceptable carriers, stabilizers and excipients, and prepared in dosage form, e.g. by lyophilization in dosage vials. The amount of active compound to be administered will depend on the route of administration, the disease to be treated and the condition of the patient. Local injection in case of inflammatory conditions of rheumatoid arthritis will require less TBP-II on a body weight basis than will intravenous infusion in case of septic shock.

The invention will now be illustrated by the following non-limiting examples:

EXAMPLE 1: PURIFICATION OF TBP-II

45 1.1 Preparation of the urine concentrate

A pool of 200 l urine from healthy male donors or from healthy postmenopausal women was subjected to microfiltration on a Pellicon membrane with a pore size of 0.45 µm. The filtrate was concentrated by ultrafiltration using a Pellicon membrane with a molecular weight cut-off of 10 kDa to a final volume of 500 ml. The concentrate was dialyzed against phosphate buffered saline containing 1 mM benzamidine and 0.1% sodium azide.

1.2 Affinity purification of TBP-I and TBP-II on a column of immobilized TNF

Recombinant TNF- α was brought to a concentration of 7.2 mg/ml, then equilibrated with PBS containing 0.02% sodium azide and coupled to Affigel 10 (3.6 mg to 0.5 ml beads). A sample of 250 ml of the concentrate of urinary proteins of step 1.1 was applied to a column constructed from the beads of the

immobilized TNF at a flow rate of 0.2 - 0.3 ml/min. at 4°C. Unbound proteins were removed by washing with PBS and the bound proteins were then eluted by applying a solution of 25 mM citric acid, 100 mM NaCl and 0.02% sodium azide, at pH 2.5. The specific bioactivity (inhibition of TNF toxicity) of the eluted proteins was about 20,000 fold higher than that of the crude urinary proteins (Table I). In SDS PAGE analysis most of the protein in the eluate migrated as a single broad band with apparent molecular size of about 30,000±2,000.

1.3 Reversed-phase high pressure liquid chromatography (HPLC)

Further fractionation of the affinity purified proteins of step 1.2 was by reversed-phase HPLC on an Aquapore RP300 column (4.6x30 mm, Brownlee Labs), first pre-equilibrated and then washed with 0.3% aqueous trifluoroacetic acid (TFA) (Buffer F) until a stable baseline was obtained by the fluorescamine detection system. Pooled active fractions eluted from the affinity TNF column of step 1.2 were applied on the column, elution was performed at a flow rate of 0.5 ml/minute with linear gradients of acetonitrile in Buffer F, (0-20% for 5 minutes, followed by 20-50% for 60 minutes and finally 50-80% for 5 minutes), and then the column was washed for 15 minutes with 80% acetonitrile. Fractions of 0.5 ml were collected and examined for protein content (—) and for bioactivity (█), as shown in Figure 1 (--- stands for elution with gradient of acetonitrile in Buffer F).

The bioactivity was measured by the same bioassay developed for TBP-I. It is based on the cytotoxic effect of TNF on cycloheximide (CHI)-sensitized cells and its quantitation by the neutral-red uptake method, as described in Wallach, D. (1984) J. Immunol. 132:2464-2469. It is used in the present invention for monitoring the activity of TBP-II during purification.

- Samples to be tested for the presence of the protein were diluted two-fold serially, at 4°C, in Dulbecco's Modified Eagle's Minimal Essential Medium (DMEM), and equal volumes of the same medium containing 40 U/ml TNF- α and 400 μ g/ml cycloheximide (CHI) is added thereto. The final concentration of TNF- α on the cells was 5 U/ml and of CHI was 50 μ g/ml.
- Murine A9 cells were seeded in 96-well flat-bottom microtiter plates (1.5×10^4 cells/ well) with 100 μ l DMEM-CS (DMEM containing 5% fetal calf serum and 5% calf serum).
- 100 μ l aliquots of the serially diluted protein TNF- α -CHI mixtures were applied to each well and the cells were further incubated for 14 hours.
- Viability of the cells was determined by incubation with neutral red for 2 hours, washing away excess dye, extracting the neutral red that was taken up by the cells with Sorenson's citrate buffer-ethanol mixture, and quantitating it colorimetrically at 570 nm with a Microelisa Auto-reader.
- 1 U/ml of TNF inhibitor activity was defined as the dilution factor giving a statistically significant protection from TNF killing ($p<0.05$).

TABLE I

Purification of TBP-I and TBP-II					
Purification step	Protein	Protective activity		Specific activity	Purification
	mg	Units	%	units*/mg	fold
Crude urinary proteins	9,400	117,200	100	12,4	
Affinity purification					
Flow through	9,300	Below detection			
Eluted proteins	0,36	98,600	84.2	273,800	22,000
Reversed-phase HPLC					
Total	0.217	31,200	26.6	143,400	11,600
TBP-I	0.070	22,300	19.0	318,600	
TBP-II	0.147	8,900	7.6	60,700	

* A unit of protective activity was defined as the amount of TNF-binding proteins in whose presence the number of cells remaining viable under the conditions of the assay for the protective effect of the proteins against TNF cytotoxicity, was doubled.

As shown in Figure 1, the active proteins were found to elute from the HPLC column as two distinct protein peaks, in fractions corresponding to about 27% acetonitrile (TBP-I) and about 31% acetonitrile (TBP-II). Both proteins had a protective effect against TNF cytotoxicity, though the specific activity of TBP-II was lower than that of TBP-I (Table I).

The inhibitory effect of TBP-II on the binding of radiolabelled TNF to cells was performed as described by Olsson, I. et al (1989) Eur.J.Hematol. 42, pp. 270-275. As with TBP-I, it was observed that TBP-II decreases the ^{125}I -TNF- α binding to the cells only when ^{125}I -TNF- α and TBP-II are applied together on cells and not when TBP-II is first applied on cells and then removed prior to the application of TNF- α . This indicates that the interference with TNF- α binding to cells is not due to an effect of TBP-II on the cells, but it rather reflects some kind of interaction between TBP-II and TNF- α .

The binding activities of TBP-I and TBP-II were examined in a solid phase assay with the use of radiolabelled preparations of the proteins. Both were found to bind TNF- α and this binding could be competed with excess TNF- α and, at a lower effectiveness, also with TNF- β . It could not be competed, though, with several other cytokines examined (IL-1, IL-6, IFN-gamma, Table II)

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TABLE II

Binding of TBP-I and TBP-II to TNF- α and the effect of competitive cytokines		
Proteins applied* for competition for TBP binding	^{125}I TBP-I	^{125}I TBP-II
	(bound CPM)	
huTNF- α huTNF- β IL-1 α IL-6 IFN-gamma TBP-I TBP-II	27700(\pm 2000) 1050(\pm 140) 21000(\pm 850) 28100(\pm 460) 27050(\pm 570) 28050(\pm 1050) 1900(\pm 170) N.D.	17634(\pm 1230) 2400(\pm 174) 6240(\pm 230) 17840(\pm 890) 18570(\pm 1120) 18470(\pm 1430) 2240(\pm 160) 2005(\pm 150)

* All proteins were applied at a concentration of 10 $\mu\text{g}/\text{ml}$.

35 1.4 SDS-PAGE

In order to monitor the result of the purification, sodium dodecyl sulphate polyacrylamide gel electrophoresis (SDS-PAGE) was performed according to the method of Laemmli U.K. et al. (1970) Nature 227:680. In Figure 2A, analysis under reducing conditions of the affinity purification step is shown: lane 1 - unfractionated urinary proteins; lane 2 - proteins eluted from the TNF column by the low pH buffer. In figure 2B, analysis under reducing conditions of active fractions eluting from the reversed-phase HPLC, is shown. Samples were mixed with 3 x concentrated sample buffer containing 6% SDS (w/v) and 15% v/v β -mercaptoethanol and loaded on a 12% acrylamide gel (lanes 1-4: TBP-I; Lanes 5-9: TBP-II). As a reference marker for molecular weight, a mixture of molecular weight markers (α lactalbumin 14.4 kDa, soya bean trypsin inhibitor 20.1 kDa, carbonic anhydrase 30 kDa, ovalbumin 43 kDa, bovine serum albumin 67 kDa, and phosphorylase b. 94 kDa) was used. A blank with sample buffer was run on lane 10. The gel was run at 160 volt and the protein bands were visualized by silver staining (Oakley, B.R. et al. Anal. Biochem. 105:361).

1.5 N-Terminal Sequence Analysis

Samples of the substantially purified TBP-II of the invention (1-5 μg , 50-200 pmol each) were applied to pretreated, biobrene-coated glass-fiber discs. The dried discs were subjected to repetitive cycles of Edman degradation in an automated pulsed liquid gas phase protein microsequencer (Model 475) with an on-line HPLC PTH-amino acid analyzer (Model 120) and a data acquisition and processing unit Model 900, (all from Applied Biosystems Inc. Foster City, CA, U.S.A.). The computer-derived sequence was compared with the raw data and was corrected when necessary. Altogether three separate analyses were performed in order to confirm the sequence data. The initial yield was over 40%, indicating that the major protein in the preparation (the 30 kDa band) is related to the resulting sequence.

N-terminal sequence analysis of the protein of fraction 27 (Fig. 1) gave the following sequence:

Val-Ala-Phe-Thr-Pro-Tyr-Ala-Pro-Glu-Pro-Gly-Ser-Thr-Cys-Arg-Leu-Arg-Glu-Tyr-

5 Tyr-Asp-

accompanied by higher amounts of a sequence shorter by 3 amino acids:

10 Thr-Pro-Tyr-Ala-Pro-Glu-Pro-Gly-Ser-Thr
and by even higher amounts of a sequence lacking two terminal amino acids:

15 Phe-Thr-Pro-Tyr-Ala-Pro-Glu-Pro-Gly-Ser-Thr
On the other hand, in fraction 28, the sequence Val-Ala-Phe-Thr-Pro... was the major one and, in addition,
one could discern at lower amounts the shorter sequence Phe-Thr-Pro..., and at even lower amounts, the
sequence Thr-Pro....

The least truncated sequence of the protein obtained from different batches of purified TBP-II was as follows:

20 Ala-Gln-Val-Ala-Phe-Thr-Pro-Tyr-Ala-Pro-Glu-Pro-Gly-Ser-Thr-Cys-Arg-Leu-Arg-
Glu-Tyr-Tyr-Asp-Gln-Thr-Ala-Gln-Met-Cys-Cys-

25 EXAMPLE 2: PREPARATION OF TRYPTIC PEPTIDES OF TBP-II

Purified TBP-II (180 µg) was reduced and alkylated as described by Andrews, P.C. and Dixon, J.E., (1987) Anal.Biochem. 161, pp. 524-528. It was then applied again on an Aquapore RP300 column (see example 1.3) in order to remove residues of the reduction - alkylation reagents. The purified TBP-II was then fragmented by digestion overnight with trypsin (substrate/enzyme ratio of 20:1), at pH8.0. The peptides obtained were purified by reversed-phase HPLC on a C-18 SynChropak® RP-P column. The sequences of six peptides comprised in fractions 44, 50, 53, 53', 60 and 84 were determined as in Example 1.5 and are depicted in Figure 3.

35 EXAMPLE 3: Preparation of polyclonal antibodies against TBP-II

For the immunization of rabbits, the animals were first injected subcutaneously with 20 µg of TBP-II as emulsion in complete Freund adjuvant. Three weeks later they were injected again, intramuscularly, as emulsion in incomplete Freund adjuvant and then twice again subcutaneously as solution in PBS, at one week intervals. The rabbits were bled 10 days after the last immunization.

For the purification of immunoglobulins from the rabbit serum, saturated ammonium sulfate was added to 10ml serum to a final concentration of 50% saturation. After overnight incubation at 4°C, the immunoglobulins were precipitated by centrifugation. The pellet was washed twice with 50% ammonium sulfate, then solubilized in 10mM sodium borate 0.02% sodium azide at pH 9. The solution was then dialyzed extensively against the borate-azide solution. It was then applied for chromatography on HPLC Mono-Q column, from which the proteins were eluted with a gradient of 0-500 mM NaCl in the above borate-azide solution. The immunoglobulins eluted at a salt concentration of approximately 70 mM NaCl.

The antiserum to TBP-II suppressed the binding of ¹²⁵I-TNF to U-937 cells by about 50% at a dilution of 1:6400. Antiserum to TBP-I was raised in rabbits in the same conditions and the extent of the immunological cross-reactivity of both antisera were examined by Western blot analysis. It showed that TBP-I and TBP-II are immunologically distinct: each antiserum recognized significantly only that species of TBP against which it had been raised.

Similarly, when examining the interaction of the antisera and the proteins in ELISA, the antiserum against TBP-I was found to react with TBP-I at a dilution of up to 1:25,000, but did not react with TBP-II, not even at a dilution of 1:100. Figure 4 shows the results of ELISA for the binding of antisera against TBP-I and TBP-II to the two species of TBP. The binding of (○) antiserum against TBP-I to TBP-I, (■) antiserum TBP-II to the two species of TBP. The binding of (○) antiserum against TBP-II to TBP-I, and (●) antiserum against TBP-II to TBP-II, is

presented in terms of the absorbance of the color product in the horseradish peroxidase assay. The readings in a control test at which the antibodies were applied on wells coated with BSA were subtracted. (The slight binding of the antiserum against TBP-II to TBP-I, observed in Fig. 2, could be shown to be due to contamination of the antiserum with antibodies to TBP-I, at low amounts, due to the presence of some 5 TBP-I in the preparation of TBP-II used for immunization).

EXAMPLE 4: Effects of the polyclonal antibodies on binding of TNF to cells

The antisera to TBP-I and TBP-II were diluted in Dulbecco's balanced salt solution (PBS⁺) containing 10 0.5% BSA and 0.1% sodium azide (PBS/BSA) and then either directly or, in competition experiments, after incubation with a sample of TBP, applied for 2 h on the tested cells of the HeLa, MCF7, K562 and U937 cell 15 lines. The cells were then rinsed and tested for binding of TNF.

Figure 5 shows the inhibition of the binding of radiolabelled TNF to U937, K562, HeLa and MCF7 cells with antisera to Tap-I (o) and TBP-II (□). The net binding observed in the absence of antisera (100%) was in 20 each affecting to different extent cells of different lines. The antiserum against TBP-I inhibits effectively the binding of TNF to HeLa and MCF7 cells, but has no effect on the binding of TNF to U937 cells and only little effect on the binding of TNF to K562 cells. Inversely, the antiserum against TBP-II blocks effectively the binding of TNF to the K562 and U937 cells, but inhibits the binding of TNF to the HeLa and MCF7 cells 25 only at high concentrations. The effect of the antiserum against TBP-II on the latter cells could be shown, only at high concentrations. The effect of the antisera to TBP-I and TBP-II were added to the serum, to be due to the presence of contaminating antibodies to TBP-I in this preparation of antiserum to TBP-II.

EXAMPLE 5: Monoclonal antibodies to TBP-II

Production of the monoclonal antibodies

Female Balb/C mice (8 weeks old) were injected with 1 µg purified TBP-II in an emulsion of complete 30 Freund's adjuvant into the hind foot pads, and three weeks later, subcutaneously into the back in incomplete Freund's adjuvant. The other injections were given in weekly intervals, subcutaneously in PBS. Final boosts were given 4 days (i.p.) and 3 days (i.v.) before the fusion with 9.0 µg of TBP-I in PBS. Fusion 35 was performed using NSO/Mr cells and lymphocytes prepared from both the spleen and the local lymphocytes of the hind legs as fusion partners. The hybridomas were selected in DMEM supplemented with HAT, 15% horse serum and gentamycin 2 µg/ml. Hybridomas that were found to produce antibodies to TBP-I were subcloned by the limiting dilution method and injected into Balb/C mice that had been primed with pristane for the production of ascites. Immunoglobulins were isolated from the ascites by ammonium sulfate precipitation (50% saturation) and then dialyzed against PBS containing 0.02% azide. Purity was approximately 60% as estimated by analysis on SDS-PAGE and staining with Comassie blue. The 40 isotypes of the antibodies were defined with the use of a commercially available ELISA kit (Amersham, U.K.).

Several positive clones were obtained, subcloned for further studies and characterized. Some of the isolated subclones with their isotype and binding of TBP-II in inverted RIA are listed in Table III.

Table III

Subclones producing monoclonal antibodies to TBP-II

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	Clone number	Screening with iRIA [CPM]	Screening of subclone with iRIA [CPM]	Isotype
10	13.11	31800	31000	IgG ₁
	.12		31500	IgG ₁
	.13		31100	IgG ₁
15	14.1	15300	15400	IgG _{2a}
	.6		16200	IgG _{2a}
	.7		15300	IgG _{2a}
20	20.2	12800	14200	IgG _{2b}
	.5		14300	IgG _{2b}
	.6		14800	IgG _{2b}
25	22.7	20400	20000	IgG ₁
	.8		19300	IgG ₁
	27.1	18000	27000	IgG _{2a}
30	.3		25000	IgG _{2a}
	.9		28000	IgG _{2a}
	32.4	11315	10900	IgG _{2b}
35	.5		10700	IgG _{2b}
	.6		11200	IgG _{2b}
	33.1	18400	11400	IgG ₁
40	.3		10500	IgG ₁
	.4		14800	IgG ₁
	36.1	27500	26600	IgG _{2a}
45	.5		24900	IgG _{2a}
	.6		24900	IgG _{2a}
	41.3	13800	18100	IgG ₁
50	.7		18100	IgG ₁
	.10		18800	IgG ₁
	67.1	16800	10900	IgG _{2a}
55	.16		10800	IgG _{2a}
	.17		10900	IgG _{2a}
	70.2	15100	5100	IgG _{2a}
60	.3		5200	IgG _{2a}
	.4		5300	IgG _{2a}
	77.2	15300	11800	IgG _{2b}

Table III (cont.)

Subclones producing monoclonal antibodies to TBP-II

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Clone number	Screening with iRIA [CPM]	Screening of subclone with iRIA [CPM]	Isotype
78.9	25300	21400	IgG _{2a}
82.1	17600	25900	IgG ₁
.4		25700	IgG ₁
.10		26400	IgG ₁
86.2	8800	12200	IgG _{2b}
.5		12600	IgG _{2b}
.11		12800	IgG _{2b}
19.6		29700	IgG _{2a}
.9		28900	IgG _{2a}

Hybridomas TBP-II 13-12 and TBP-II 70-2 were deposited with the Collection Nationale de Cultures de Microorganismes (CNCM), Institut Pasteur, 25, rue du Docteur Roux, 75724 Paris CEDEX 15, France on March 12, 1990 and were assigned No. I-929 and No. I-928, respectively.

EXAMPLE 6: Inverted Radioimmunoassay (iRIA) for the detection of the monoclonal antibodies to TBP-II

This assay was used for estimating the level of the anti-TBP antibodies in the sera of the immunized mice and for screening for the production of the antibodies by hybridomas. PVC, 96-well microtiter plates (Dynatech 1-220-25) were coated for 12 hr at 4°C with affinity purified goat anti mouse F(ab) immunoglobulins (Biomakor, Israel 10 µg/ml in PBS containing 0.02% NaN₃), then blocked for 2 hr at 37°C with 0.5% BSA in PBS supplemented with 0.05% Tween 20 (Sigma) and 0.02% NaN₃ (blocking buffer) and with 0.5% BSA in PBS containing 0.05% Tween 20 and 0.02% NaN₃ (washing buffer). Serum samples, washed 3 times with PBS containing 0.05% Tween 20 and 0.02% NaN₃ were applied into the wells for 2 hr at 37°C. The plates were rinsed with washing buffer and ¹²⁵I-labelled TBP-I (10,000 cpm, in blocking buffer) was applied into the wells. After further incubation of 2 hr at 37°C, the plates were washed and the amount of label which bound to individual wells was determined in the gamma-counter.

EXAMPLE 7: The Use of anti-TBP-II antibodies for affinity chromatography

Antibodies against TBP-II can be utilized for the purification of TBP-II by affinity chromatography, according to the following procedure. The monoclonal antibodies for affinity chromatography were selected by testing their binding capacity for the radiolabeled antigen in a solid phase radio immunoassay. Ascites from all hybridomas was purified by ammonium sulfate precipitation at 50% saturation followed by extensive dialysis against PBS. PVC 96-well plates were coated with the purified McAbs, and after blocking the plates with PBS containing 0.5% BSA, 0.05% Tween 20 (Sigma) and 0.02% NaN₃, the wells were incubated with 50,000 cpm ¹²⁵I-TNF for 2 h at 37°C, then washed and the radioactivity which had bound to each well was quantitated in the gamma-counter. The antibodies with the highest binding capacity were examined for their performance in immunoaffinity chromatography.

Polyacryl hydrazide agarose was used as resin to immobilize the antibodies. The semipurified immunoglobulins were concentrated and coupled to the resin as specified by Wilchek and Miron, Methods in Enzymology 34:72-76, 1979. Three monoclonal antibodies against TBP-I, clones 16, 20, and 34 were tested in these experiments. Antibody columns of 1 ml bed were constructed. Before use, all columns were

subjected to 10 washes with the elution buffer, each wash followed by neutralization with PBS. Then the columns were loaded with 120 ml of concentrated urinary proteins in PBS with 0.02% NaN₃. The flow rate of the columns was adjusted to 0.2 to 0.3 ml per minute. After loading, the columns were washed with 50 ml PBS and then eluted with a solution containing 50 mM citric acid, pH 2.5, 100 mM NaCl and 0.02% NaN₃. Fractions of 1 ml were collected. Samples of the applied urinary proteins, the last portion of the wash (1 ml) and of each elution fraction (8 fractions of 1 ml per column) were taken and tested for protein concentration and activity in the bioassay for TBP-II. According to the protein measurements before and after coupling of the antibodies to hydrazide agarose, the amounts of immunoglobulin bound to the columns ranged from 7 to 10 mg/ml agarose. All protein measurements were done according to a micro-fluorescamin method in comparison to a standard solution containing 100 µg BSA/ml (Stein, S. and Moschera, J., Methods Enzymol. 79:7-16, 1981).

EXAMPLE 8: Determination of TBP-II using anti-TBP-II antibodies

The levels of TBP-II in the sera of healthy individuals, patients with cancer or systemic lupus erythematosus (SLE) and of pregnant women at term were determined by an ELISA method employing a monoclonal antibody to TBP-II coating the plates. 50 µl of each sample was added and after a 2.5 h incubation at 37°C the wells were washed with a solution of PBS, Tween 0.05% and sodium azide 0.02%, after which a rabbit anti-TBP-II polyclonal antibody was added for 2.5 h at 37°C. Then the wells were washed again (no azide) and goat anti-rabbit horseradish peroxidase-coupled antibody was added for 2 h. Following this incubation, and washing, an ABTS buffer was added and optical density (O.D.) read 30 min. later at 600nm.

The normal levels of TBP-II in human serum of healthy individuals as determined by the ELISA method are 1.48±0.46 ng/ml.

In the sera of 46 patients with Systemic Lupus Erythematosus (SLE), the TBP-II levels were 4.04±3.75 ng/ml, a value highly significant compared to the normal levels ($p<0.001$). As shown in Fig. 6, 29 out of the 46 patients with SLE had a TBP-II level higher than the mean±2SD of normal values. We found a highly significant correlation between the TBP-II levels and the disease activity index developed by Symmonds, D.P.M. et al, Quarterly J. of Med. (1988), Vol. 69, pp. 927-937: $r=0.62$, $p<0.001$. A similar correlation was found between TBP-II and the classical marker of SLE activity, the anti-DNA antibodies ($r=0.64$, $p<0.001$) and between a major clinical manifestation of SLE activity, i.e., joint pains and TBP-II ($r=0.54$, $p<0.001$).

These results indicate that TBP-II may be useful as a sensitive marker of disease activity and a predictor of exacerbations in SLE patients, and thus may be useful in monitoring immune activation related to disease activity in these patients as well as in patients with other autoimmune diseases.

By the above ELISA method, the TBP-II levels in sera of patients with different types of cancer, were examined. In 20 out of 34 patients (58.8%) with different types of cancer, the TBP-II levels were above the normal mean ± 2SD. The difference between the TBP-II of cancer patients (4.16±4.08 ng/ml) and healthy controls (1.48±0.46 ng/ml) was highly significant statistically ($p<0.001$).

These results indicate that TBP-II may prove a useful and universal marker of different types of cancer and may be applied in early detection of this condition. After cancer resection, normalization of TBP-II levels may be a marker of cure of the disease. An increase in TBP-II, after initial normalization, may be an early and sensitive universal marker of disease relapse.

14 pregnant women at term with eclampsia or pre-eclampsia had statistically significant higher TBP-II levels (2.91±0.96 ng/ml) than 16 normotensive pregnant women (1.58±0.52) as determined by the ELISA method ($p<0.001$).

EXAMPLE 9: Combinations of TBP-II and TNF

In order to examine the activity of TBP-II to prolong beneficial effects of TNF, the following experiments were performed:

FS11 fibroblasts (passage 9) were cultured in microwells (96-well plates) at an initial concentration of 10000 cells/well. After 24 h, mixtures comprising a constant concentration of rTNF (5 ng/ml) and different concentrations of TBP-II (3 ng to 100 ng/ml) were added to respective wells. To control wells were added medium, rTNF only, or respective TBP-II concentrations, without TNF. After 7 days in culture, the supernatants of the cells were collected and frozen immediately to -20°C for further determination of residual TNF cytotoxicity and residual TBP-II. After removal of the supernatants, H³-thymidine was added to a FS11 plate for 8 h while over a "tween" plate a neutral red dye was added.

The results are shown in Fig. 7. Fig. 7 (D) shows that in the presence of TNF 5 ng/ml and increasing TBP-II concentrations, the fibroblast growth was significantly augmented (as determined by the neutral red dye uptake) or by H³-thymidine incorporation (F). Examination of the frozen FS11 supernatants for residual TNF cytotoxicity in a bioassay (the A9 mouse cell line) showed a residual cytotoxicity paralleling the increase in the TBP-II concentrations (E), and suggesting prevention of TNF decay in the system, by TBP-II.

To further explore this phenomenon, rTNF, TBP-II and the respective controls were added to cultured FS11 fibroblasts for 2 h or 2, 5, 7 and 9 days in different plates. Thereafter, the supernatants were removed and immediately examined for TNF cytotoxicity.

As shown in Fig. 8, at 2 h out of 5 ng rTNF added in the presence of TBP-II, only 0.6 ng remained bioactive, the rest being bound and neutralized by TBP-II. However, between days 2 and 9, while the "lone" rTNF lost its bioactivity rapidly, the detectable cytotoxicity of the rTNF in the presence of TBP-II was 10 times higher. Thus, TBP-II neutralized the high TNF concentration initially, but protected the remaining times higher. These results indicate that TBP-II binds TNF and bioactive TNF from an accelerated loss of its bioactivity. These results indicate that TBP-II binds TNF and prevents its natural decay or loss of activity, thus being useful as a carrier to prolong TNF beneficial effects.

EXAMPLE 10: Epitope mapping of TBP-II by cross competition analysis with monoclonal antibodies (mAbs) to TBP-II

PVC 96-well microtiter plates were coated as described above, with purified mAbs to TBP-II (25 µg/ml). Following rinsing and blocking, samples of ¹²⁵I-labelled TBP-II (100,000 cpm per well) which had been preincubated for 2 h, at 37 °C with the same or a different monoclonal antibody to TBP-II (at 1 µg/ml) were put into the wells; the plates were incubated overnight at 4 °C, washed and the radioactivity bound to each well was determined by gamma-counting. The results are expressed as percent of the control values (TBP-II binding in the absence of competing mAbs).

The results are depicted in Table IV. The monoclonal antibodies are indicated by the clone numbers in the first row and in left column. Low percent binding values indicate that the two antibodies compete for each other's epitope on TBP-II, while higher values indicate that they bind to different epitopes. Non-competitive antibodies are suitable for use in double-sandwich ELISA, e.g., clones 13 and 70.

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Cross competition analysis with monoclonal antibodies to TBP II

		solid	phase	antibodies														
		13	14	19	20	22	27	32	33	36	41	67	70	77	78	82	86	
13	4	64	53	73	31	51	161	35	177	72	131	128	77	102	50	101		
14	119	20	90	13	13	84	156	11	132	173	134	113	14	70	89	179		
19	103	28	7	19	11	5	144	11	144	133	179	123	18	5	85	126		
20	119	17	93	14	10	88	149	9	135	170	137	135	16	70	101	181		
22	109	26	94	22	13	82	128	12	115	164	136	114	17	68	98	167		
27	106	23	11	27	14	8	145	17	152	133	196	136	24	8	82	125		
32	150	267	150	291	156	186	14	163	139	200	205	18	294	143	103	226		
33	115	19	98	23	16	86	133	12	118	156	120	114	24	78	90	155		
36	155	262	168	271	144	185	167	158	12	169	223	135	265	158	93	150		
41	117	119	119	118	101	109	118	76	93	9	179	107	106	111	8	9		
67	112	138	125	141	125	157	136	107	138	213	30	117	120	127	106	236		
70	150	246	150	255	145	166	4	162	166	217	204	6	232	132	107	234		
77	121	18	98	15	13	78	148	11	145	184	142	132	18	66	103	184		
78	118	20	9	26	10	6	153	13	157	137	183	131	19	6	94	172		
82	107	110	130	116	112	121	128	89	90	8	162	102	121	113	8	7		
86	122	181	125	166	126	129	131	120	86	18	253	109	152	125	20	17		
100% value	31582	3958	2057	5437	4947	17395	25923	3525	6368	8042	4368	24113	5887	22222	11608	9703		

Claims

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1. A Tumor Necrosis Factor (TNF) Binding Protein II (TBP-II) having the following features:
 (a) it inhibits the cytotoxic effect of TNF and/or maintains its prolonged beneficial effects;

- (b) it contains the following amino acid sequence:
 Thr-Pro-Tyr-Ala-Pro-Glu-Pro-Gly-Ser-Thr;
 or salts, functional derivatives, precursors or active fractions thereof or mixtures of the foregoing, said
 fractions having the ability to inhibit the cytotoxic effect of TNF on cells and/or to maintain its prolonged
 beneficial effect.
- 5
2. The TBP-II of claim 1 in substantially purified form.
 3. The TBP-II of claim 1 or 2 having a molecular weight of about 30 kDa when the substantially purified
 10 protein is analyzed by SDS-PAGE under reducing conditions.
 4. The TBP-II of any one of claims 1 to 3 moving as a single peak on reversed-phase high performance
 liquid chromatography (HPLC).
 - 15 5. The TBP-II according to any one of claims 1 to 4 having the ability to inhibit the cytotoxic effect of
 TNF- α on murine A9 cells.
 6. The TBP-II according to any one of claims 1 to 5 which contains the following amino acid sequence:
 20 Ala-Gln-Val-Ala-Phe-Thr-Pro-Tyr-Ala-Pro-Glu-Pro-Gly-
 Ser-Thr-Cys-Arg-Leu-Arg-Glu-Tyr-Tyr-Asp-Gln-Thr-Ala-
 Gln-Met-Cys-Cys-
 - 25 or a truncated form thereof.
 7. A process for the isolation of substantially purified TBP-II Protein which comprises:
 (a) recovering the crude protein fraction from a dialyzed concentrate of human urine;
 30 (b) subjecting said crude protein fraction of step (a) to affinity chromatography on a column of
 immobilized TNF to obtain purified active fractions of TNF Binding Proteins defined by their ability to
 inhibit the cytotoxic effect of TNF;
 (c) applying said purified active fractions of the TNF Binding Proteins from step (b) to reversed-
 phase HPLC to obtain substantially purified active fractions of TNF Binding Proteins defined by their
 35 ability to inhibit the cytotoxic effect of TNF; and
 (d) recovering the substantially purified TBP-II protein of step (c), said protein having a molecular
 weight of about 30 kD on SDS PAGE under reducing conditions, moving as a single peak in the
 fraction corresponding to about 31% acetonitrile on reversed phase HPLC and having the ability to
 inhibit the cytotoxic effect of TNF.
 - 40 8. The TBP-II according to any one of claims 1 to 6 produced by the process of claim 7.
 9. The TBP-II of any one of claims 1 to 6 or 8 wherein the TBP-II is of human origin.
 - 45 10. The TPB-II of any one of claims 1 to 6 or 9 which is a recombinant protein.
 11. The TBP-II of claim 10 which is produced in a prokaryotic host, preferably in E. coli, or in a eukaryotic
 host, preferably in a mammalian cell.
 - 50 12. A DNA molecule comprising a nucleotide sequence coding for the TBP-II of any one of claims 1 to 6 or
 8 to 11.
 13. A replicable expression vehicle comprising the DNA molecule of claim 12 and capable, in a transfor-
 mant host cell, of expressing the TBP-II defined in any one of claims 1 to 6 or 8 to 11.
 - 55 14. A host cell selected from a prokaryotic and a eukaryotic cell transformed with the replicable expression
 vehicle of claim 12.

15. A process for producing recombinant TBP-II comprising the steps of
 - (a) culturing a transformed host cell according to claim 13 in a suitable culture medium; and
 - (b) isolating said TNF Binding Protein TBP-II.
- 5 16. A pharmaceutical composition comprising TBP-II and/or salts, functional derivatives, precursors, or active fractions thereof or mixtures of any of the foregoing according to any one of claims 1 to 6 or 8 to 11 as active ingredient together with a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier, said fractions having the ability to inhibit the cytotoxic effect of TNF on cells and/or to maintain its prolonged beneficial effect
- 10 17. The pharmaceutical composition according to claim 16 for use in antagonizing the deleterious effect of TNF in mammals, especially in the treatment of conditions wherein excess of TNF is formed endogenously or is exogenously administered.
- 15 18. The pharmaceutical composition according to claim 16 for use in maintaining prolonged beneficial effects of TNF in mammals, when used with TNF exogenously administered.
19. An antibody to TBP-II according to any one of claims 1 to 6 or 8 to 11 which specifically recognizes said protein.
- 20 20. The antibody according to claim 19 which is further characterized in that it blocks the binding of TNF to U937 and K562 cells.
21. The antibody according to claim 19 or 20 further characterized in that it does not block the binding of TNF to HeLa and MCF7 cells.
- 25 22. The antibody according to any one of claims 19 to 21 which is a polyclonal antibody.
23. The antibody according to any one of claims 19 to 21 which is a monoclonal antibody.
- 30 24. The monoclonal antibody according to claim 23 produced from a hybridoma formed by fusion of myeloma cells with spleen cells and/or lymphocytes of mice previously immunized with TBP-II.
- 25 25. The monoclonal antibody according to claim 24 produced from hybridoma TBP-II 13-12 (CNCM I-929).
- 35 26. The monoclonal antibody according to claim 24 produced from hybridoma TBP-II 70-2 (CNCM I-928).
27. A pharmaceutical composition containing an antibody according to any one of claims 19 to 26 or F(ab) fragments thereof or salts, functional derivatives or active fractions of the antibody or of the fragment thereof together with a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.
- 40 28. The pharmaceutical composition according to claim 27 for use in blocking the binding of TNF to, and inhibiting its effect on cells.
29. The pharmaceutical composition according to claim 28 for use in the treatment of conditions wherein effects of TNF, either endogenously formed or exogenously administered, are to be antagonized.
- 45 30. The pharmaceutical composition according to claim 27 for use in mimicking beneficial effects of TNF on cells.
31. The pharmaceutical composition according to claim 27 for use in mimicking the cytotoxic effect of TNF.
32. An in vitro immunoassay for TBP-II in body fluids characterized by measuring its interaction with an antibody according to any one of claims 19 to 26.
- 55 33. The TBP-II according to any one of claims 1 to 6 or 8 to 11 for use in diagnostic assays for measuring the levels of antibodies to TBP-II endogenously produced in sera of patients in several disorders, preferably in autoimmune diseases.

34. A method for the purification of human TBP-II utilizing a suitable antibody according to any one of claims 19 to 26, said method comprising the following steps:
- (a) coupling said antibody to a suitable resin to construct an immunoaffinity column;
 - (b) loading a solution containing said protein on said immunoaffinity column;
 - (c) washing away the non-bound proteins with a suitable washing buffer;
 - (d) eluting the bound TBP-II with a suitable eluent; and
 - (e) collecting the enriched fraction of said TBP-II.

Patentansprüche

- 10 1. Tumor-Necrosefaktor (TNF)-Bindungsprotein II (TBP-II) mit den folgenden Merkmalen:
- (a) es hemmt den cytotoxischen Effekt von TNF und/oder erhält seine verlängerten günstigen Wirkungen aufrecht,
 - (b) es enthält die folgende Aminosäuresequenz:
Thr-Pro-Tyr-Ala-Pro-Glu-Pro-Gly-Ser-Thr,
- 15 oder Salze, funktionelle Derivate, Vorläufer oder aktive Fraktionen davon oder Gemische von diesen, wobei die Fraktionen die cytotoxische Wirkung von TNF auf Zellen hemmen können und/oder seine verlängerte günstige Wirkung aufrechterhalten können.
- 20 2. TBP-II nach Anspruch 1 in im wesentlichen gereinigter Form.
3. TBP-II nach Anspruch 1 oder 2 mit einem Molekulargewicht von etwa 30 kD bei der Analyse des im wesentlichen gereinigten Proteins durch SDS-PAGE unter reduzierenden Bedingungen.
- 25 4. TBP-II nach einem der Ansprüche 1 bis 3, das in der Umkehrphasen-Hochleistungs-Flüssigkeitschromatographie (HPLC) als ein einzelner Peak läuft.
5. TBP-II nach einem der Ansprüche 1 bis 4 mit der Fähigkeit zur Hemmung des cytotoxischen Effekts von TNF- α auf murine A9-Zellen.
- 30 6. TBP-II nach einem der Ansprüche 1 bis 5, das die folgende Aminosäuresequenz enthält:
- Ala-Gln-Val-Ala-Phe-Thr-Pro-Tyr-Ala-Pro-Glu-Pro-Gly-
Ser-Thr-Cys-Arg-Leu-Arg-Glu-Tyr-Tyr-Asp-Gln-Thr-Ala-
Gln-Met-Cys-Cys-
- 35 oder eine verkürzte Form davon.
- 40 7. Verfahren zur Isolierung von im wesentlichen gereinigtem TBP-II-Protein, umfassend:
- (a) Gewinnen der Rohproteinfraktion aus einem dialysierten Konzentrat von menschlichem Urin,
 - (b) Durchführung einer Affinitätschromatographie mit der Rohproteinfraktion von Schritt (a) auf einer Säule mit immobilisiertem TNF zum Erhalt von gereinigten aktiven Fraktionen von TNF-Bindungsproteinen, die durch ihre Fähigkeit zur Hemmung des cytotoxischen Effekts von TNF definiert sind,
 - (c) Durchführung einer Umkehrphasen-HPLC mit den gereinigten aktiven Fraktionen der TNF-Bindungsproteine aus Schritt (b) zum Erhalt von im wesentlichen gereinigten aktiven Fraktionen von TNF-Bindungsproteinen, die durch ihre Fähigkeit zur Hemmung des cytotoxischen Effekts von TNF definiert sind, und
 - (d) Gewinnung des im wesentlichen gereinigten TBP-II-Proteins von Schritt (c), wobei das Protein ein Molekulargewicht von etwa 30 kD bei SDS-PAGE unter reduzierenden Bedingungen besitzt, als ein einzelner Peak in der Fraktion wandert, die etwa 31 % Acetonitril bei der Umkehrphasen-HPLC entspricht, und die Fähigkeit zur Hemmung des cytotoxischen Effekts von TNF besitzt.
- 50 55 8. TBP-II nach einem der Ansprüche 1 bis 6, hergestellt nach dem Verfahren von Anspruch 7.
9. TBP-II nach einem der Ansprüche 1 bis 6 oder 8, wobei das TBP-II menschlichen Ursprungs ist.

10. TBP-II nach einem der Ansprüche 1 bis 6 oder 9, das ein rekombinantes Protein ist.
11. TBP-II nach Anspruch 10, hergestellt in einem prokaryontischen Wirt, vorzugsweise in *E. coli*, oder in einem eukaryontischen Wirt, vorzugsweise in einer Säugerzelle.
- 5 12. DNA-Molekül, umfassend eine TBP-II nach einem der Ansprüche 1 bis 6 oder 8 bis 11 codierende Nucleotidsequenz.
- 10 13. Replizierbares Expressionsvehikel, das das DNA-Molekül von Anspruch 12 umfaßt und in einer transformierten Wirtszelle das TBP-II nach einem der Ansprüche 1 bis 6 oder 8 bis 11 exprimieren kann.
14. Wirtszelle, ausgewählt aus einer prokaryontischen und einer eukaryontischen Zelle, die mit dem replizierbaren Expressionsvehikel von Anspruch 12 transformiert ist.
- 15 15. Verfahren zur Herstellung von rekombinantem TBP-II, umfassend die folgenden Schritte:
 - (a) Züchten einer transformierten Wirtszelle nach Anspruch 13 in einem geeigneten Kulturmedium und
 - (b) Isolierung des TNF-Bindungsproteins TBP-II.
- 20 16. Arzneimittel, umfassend TBP-II und/oder Salze, funktionelle Derivate, Vorläufer oder aktive Fraktionen davon oder Gemische von diesen nach einem der Ansprüche 1 bis 6 oder 8 bis 11 als aktiven Bestandteil zusammen mit einem pharmazeutisch verträglichen Träger, wobei die Fraktionen die cytotoxische Wirkung von TNF auf Zellen hemmen können und/oder seine verlängerte günstige Wirkung aufrechterhalten können.
- 25 17. Arzneimittel nach Anspruch 16 zur Anwendung in der Bekämpfung der nachteiligen Wirkung von TNF in Säugern, besonders in der Behandlung von Zuständen, bei denen ein Überschuß von TNF endogen gebildet oder exogen verabreicht wird.
- 30 18. Arzneimittel nach Anspruch 16 zur Anwendung in der Aufrechterhaltung der verlängerten günstigen Wirkungen von TNF in Säugern bei Anwendung mit exogen verabreichtem TNF.
19. Antikörper gegen TBP-II nach einem der Ansprüche 1 bis 6 oder 8 bis 11, der dieses Protein spezifisch erkennt.
- 35 20. Antikörper nach Anspruch 19, der außerdem dadurch gekennzeichnet ist, daß er die Bindung von TNF an U937- und K562-Zellen blockiert.
21. Antikörper nach Anspruch 19 oder 20, der außerdem dadurch gekennzeichnet ist, daß er die Bindung von TNF an HeLa- und MCF7-Zellen nicht blockiert.
- 40 22. Antikörper nach einem der Ansprüche 19 bis 21, der ein polyclonaler Antikörper ist.
23. Antikörper nach einem der Ansprüche 19 bis 21, der ein monoklonaler Antikörper ist.
- 45 24. Monoklonaler Antikörper nach Anspruch 23, hergestellt von einem Hybridom, das durch Fusion von Myelomzellen mit Milzzellen und/oder Lymphocyten von zuvor mit TBP-II immunisierten Mäusen gebildet wurde.
- 50 25. Monoklonaler Antikörper nach Anspruch 24, hergestellt vom Hybridom TBP-II 13-12 (CNCM I-929).
26. Monoklonaler Antikörper nach Anspruch 24, hergestellt vom Hybridom TBP-II 70-2 (CNCM I-928).
- 55 27. Arzneimittel, enthaltend einen Antikörper nach einem der Ansprüche 19 bis 26 oder F(ab)-Fragmente davon oder Salze, funktionelle Derivate oder aktive Fraktionen des Antikörpers oder des Fragments davon zusammen mit einem pharmazeutisch verträglichen Träger.

28. Arzneimittel nach Anspruch 27 zur Anwendung in der Blockierung der Bindung von TNF an Zellen und
der Hemmung seines Effekts auf Zellen.
29. Arzneimittel nach Anspruch 28 zur Anwendung in der Behandlung von Zuständen, bei denen Wirkun-
5 gen von entweder endogen gebildetem oder exogen verabreichtem TNF bekämpft werden sollen.
30. Arzneimittel nach Anspruch 27 zur Anwendung in der Nachahmung günstiger Wirkungen von TNF auf
Zellen.
- 10 31. Arzneimittel nach Anspruch 27 zur Anwendung in der Nachahmung der cytotoxischen Wirkung von
TNF.
32. In vitro-Immuntest für TBP-II in Körperflüssigkeiten` gekennzeichnet durch die Messung seiner Wech-
selwirkung mit einem Antikörper nach einem der Ansprüche 19 bis 26.
- 15 33. TBP-II nach einem der Ansprüche 1 bis 6 oder 8 bis 11 zur Anwendung in diagnostischen Tests zur
Messung der Mengen von Antikörpern gegen in Seren von Patienten bei verschiedenen Störungen,
vorzugsweise bei Autoimmunstörungen, endogen hergestelltes TBP-II.
- 20 34. Verfahren zur Reinigung von humanem TBP-II unter Verwendung eines geeigneten Antikörpers nach
einem der Ansprüche 19 bis 26, wobei das Verfahren die folgenden Schritte umfaßt:
 (a) Koppeln des Antikörpers an ein geeignetes Harz zur Herstellung einer Immunaffinitätssäule,
 (b) Beladen der Immunaffinitätssäule mit einer das Protein enthaltenden Lösung,
 (c) Wegwaschen der nicht-gebundenen Proteine mit einem geeigneten Waschpuffer,
 25 (d) Eluieren des gebundenen TBP-II mit einem geeigneten Elutionsmittel und
 (e) Sammeln der angereicherten Fraktion von TBP-II.

Revendications

- 30 1. Protéine de liaison II au facteur de nécrose tumorale (TNF) (TBP-II) ayant les caractères suivants:
 (a) elle inhibe l'effet cytotoxique du TNF et/ou maintient ses effets bénéfiques prolongés;
 (b) elle contient la séquence d'acides aminés suivante:
 Thr-Pro-Tyr-Ala-Pro-Glu-Pro-Gly-Ser-Thr;
 ou ses sels, dérivés fonctionnels, précurseurs ou fractions actives, ou leurs mélanges, lesdites
 35 ou ses sels, dérivés fonctionnels, précurseurs ou fractions actives, ou leurs mélanges, lesdites
 fractions ayant la capacité d'inhiber l'effet cytotoxique du TNF ou de cellules et/ou de maintenir son
 effet bénéfique prolongé.
2. TBP-II de la revendication 1 sous une forme sensiblement purifiée.
- 40 3. TBP-II de la revendication 1 ou 2 ayant un poids moléculaire d'environ 30 kDa lorsqu'on analyse la
protéine sensiblement purifiée par SDS-PAGE dans des conditions réductrices.
4. TBP-II de l'une quelconque des revendications 1 à 3 se déplaçant sous la forme d'un seul pic à la
chromatographie en phase liquide à haute performance (HPLC) à phases inversées.
- 45 5. TBP-II selon l'une quelconque des revendications 1 à 4 ayant la capacité d'inhiber l'effet cytotoxique
du TNF- α sur des cellules A9 murines.
6. TBP-II selon l'une quelconque des revendications 1 à 5 qui contient la séquence d'acides aminés
50 suivante:

Ala-Gln-Val-Ala-Phe-Thr-Pro-Tyr-Ala-Pro-Glu-Pro-Gly-
 55 Ser-Thr-Cys-Arg-Leu-Arg-Glu-Tyr-Tyr-Asp-Gln-Thr-Ala-
 Gln-Met-Cys-Cys-

ou une forme tronquée de cette séquence.

7. Procédé d'isolement de protéine TBP-II sensiblement purifiée dans lequel:
 - (a) on recueille la fraction protéique brute à partir d'un concentré dialysé d'urine humaine;
 - (b) on soumet ladite fraction protéique brute de l'étape (a) à une chromatographie d'affinité sur une colonne de TNF immobilisée pour obtenir des fractions actives purifiées de protéines de liaison au TNF définies par leur capacité d'inhibition de l'effet cytotoxique du TNF;
 - (c) on applique lesdites fractions actives purifiées des protéines de liaison au TNF de l'étape (b) à une HPLC à phases inversées pour obtenir des fractions actives sensiblement purifiées de protéines de liaison au TNF définies par leur capacité d'inhibition de l'effet cytotoxique du TNF; et
 - (d) on recueille la protéine TBP-II sensiblement purifiée de l'étape (c), ladite protéine ayant un poids moléculaire d'environ 30 kD à la SDS PAGE dans des conditions réductrices, se déplaçant sous la forme d'un seul pic dans la fraction correspondant à environ 31% d'acétonitrile à l'HPLC à phases inversées et ayant la capacité d'inhiber l'effet cytotoxique du TNF.
8. TBP-II selon l'une quelconque des revendications 1 à 6 produite par le procédé de la revendication 7.
9. TBP-II de l'une quelconque des revendications 1 à 6 ou 8 où la TBP-II est d'origine humaine.
10. TBP-II de l'une quelconque des revendications 1 à 6 ou 9 qui est une protéine recombinante.
11. TBP-II de la revendication 10 qui est produite chez un hôte procaryote, de préférence dans E. coli, ou chez un hôte eucaryote, de préférence dans une cellule de mammifère.
12. Molécule d'ADN comprenant une séquence de nucléotide codant pour la TBP-II de l'une quelconque des revendications 1 à 6 ou 8 à 11.
13. Véhicule d'expression répliable comprenant la molécule d'ADN de la revendication 12 et capable, chez une cellule hôte transformante, d'exprimer la TBP-II définie dans l'une quelconque des revendications 1 à 6 ou 8 à 11.
14. Cellule hôte choisie parmi une cellule procaryotique et une cellule eucaryotique transformée avec le véhicule d'expression répliable de la revendication 12.
15. Procédé de production de TBP-II recombinante comprenant les étapes de
 - (a) mise en culture d'une cellule hôte transformée selon la revendication 13 dans un milieu de culture approprié; et
 - (b) isolement de ladite protéine de liaison au TNF TBP-II.
16. Composition pharmaceutique comprenant la TBP-II et/ou ses sels, dérivés fonctionnels, précurseurs ou fractions actives ou des mélanges de n'importe lesquels des corps précédents selon l'une quelconque des revendications 1 à 6 ou 8 à 11 comme ingrédient actif avec un support pharmaceutiquement acceptable, lesdites fractions étant capables d'inhiber l'effet cytotoxique du TNF sur les cellules et/ou de maintenir son effet bénéfique prolongé.
17. Composition pharmaceutique selon la revendication 16 pour application afin de s'opposer à l'effet délétère du TNF chez les mammifères, en particulier dans le traitement d'états dans lesquels un excès de TNF se forme de façon endogène ou est administré de façon exogène.
18. Composition pharmaceutique selon la revendication 16 pour application afin de maintenir les effets bénéfiques prolongés du TNF chez les mammifères, lorsqu'on l'utilise avec du TNF administré de façon exogène.
19. Anticorps anti-TBP-II selon l'une quelconque des revendications 1 à 6 ou 8 à 11 qui reconnaît spécifiquement ladite protéine.
20. Anticorps selon la revendication 19 qui se caractérise en outre en ce qu'il bloque la liaison du TNF aux cellules U937 et K562.

21. Anticorps selon la revendication 19 ou 20, caractérisé en outre en ce qu'il ne bloque pas la liaison du TNF aux cellules HeLa et MCF7.
22. Anticorps selon l'une quelconque des revendications 19 à 21 qui est un anticorps polyclonal.
- 5 23. Anticorps selon l'une quelconque des revendications 19 à 21 qui est un anticorps monoclonal.
- 10 24. Anticorps monoclonal selon la revendication 23 produit à partir d'un hybridome formé par fusion de cellules de myélome avec des cellules de rate et/ou des lymphocytes de souris préalablement immunisées avec TBP-II.
- 15 25. Anticorps monoclonal selon la revendication 24 produit à partir de l'hybridome TBP-II 13-12 (CNCM I-929).
- 16 26. Anticorps monoclonal selon la revendication 24 produit à partir de l'hybridome TBP-II 70-2 (CNCM I-928).
- 20 27. Composition pharmaceutique contenant un anticorps selon l'une quelconque des revendications 19 à 26 ou ses fragments F(ab) ou des sels, dérivés fonctionnels ou fractions actives de l'anticorps ou de son fragment avec un support pharmaceutiquement acceptable.
28. Composition pharmaceutique selon la revendication 27 pour application afin de bloquer la liaison du TNF à, et d'inhiber ses effets sur, des cellules.
- 25 29. Composition pharmaceutique selon la revendication 28 pour application dans le traitement des états dans lesquels il s'agit de s'opposer aux effets du TNF, qu'il soit formé de façon endogène ou administré de façon exogène.
- 30 30. Composition pharmaceutique selon la revendication 27 aux fins d'application pour reproduire les effets bénéfiques du TNF sur les cellules.
31. Composition pharmaceutique selon la revendication 27 aux fins d'application pour reproduire l'effet cytotoxique du TNF.
- 35 32. Immunoessai in vitro pour la TBP-II dans les fluides corporels, caractérisé en ce qu'on mesure son interaction avec un anticorps selon l'une quelconque des revendications 19 à 26.
33. TBP-II selon l'une quelconque des revendications 1 à 6 ou 8 à 11 pour application dans des essais de diagnostic pour mesurer les niveaux d'anticorps anti-TBP-II produits de façon endogène dans les sera de malades atteints de plusieurs maladies, de préférence les maladies auto-immunes.
- 40 34. Procédé de purification de TBP-II humaine utilisant un anticorps approprié selon l'une quelconque des revendications 19 à 26, ledit procédé comprenant les étapes suivantes:
(a) couplage dudit anticorps à une résine appropriée pour construire une colonne d'immunoaffinité;
(b) chargement d'une solution contenant ladite protéine sur ladite colonne d'immunoaffinité;
(c) enlèvement par lavage des protéines non liées avec un tampon de lavage approprié;
(d) élution de la TBP-II liée avec un éluant approprié; et
(e) collecte de la fraction enrichie de ladite TBP-II.

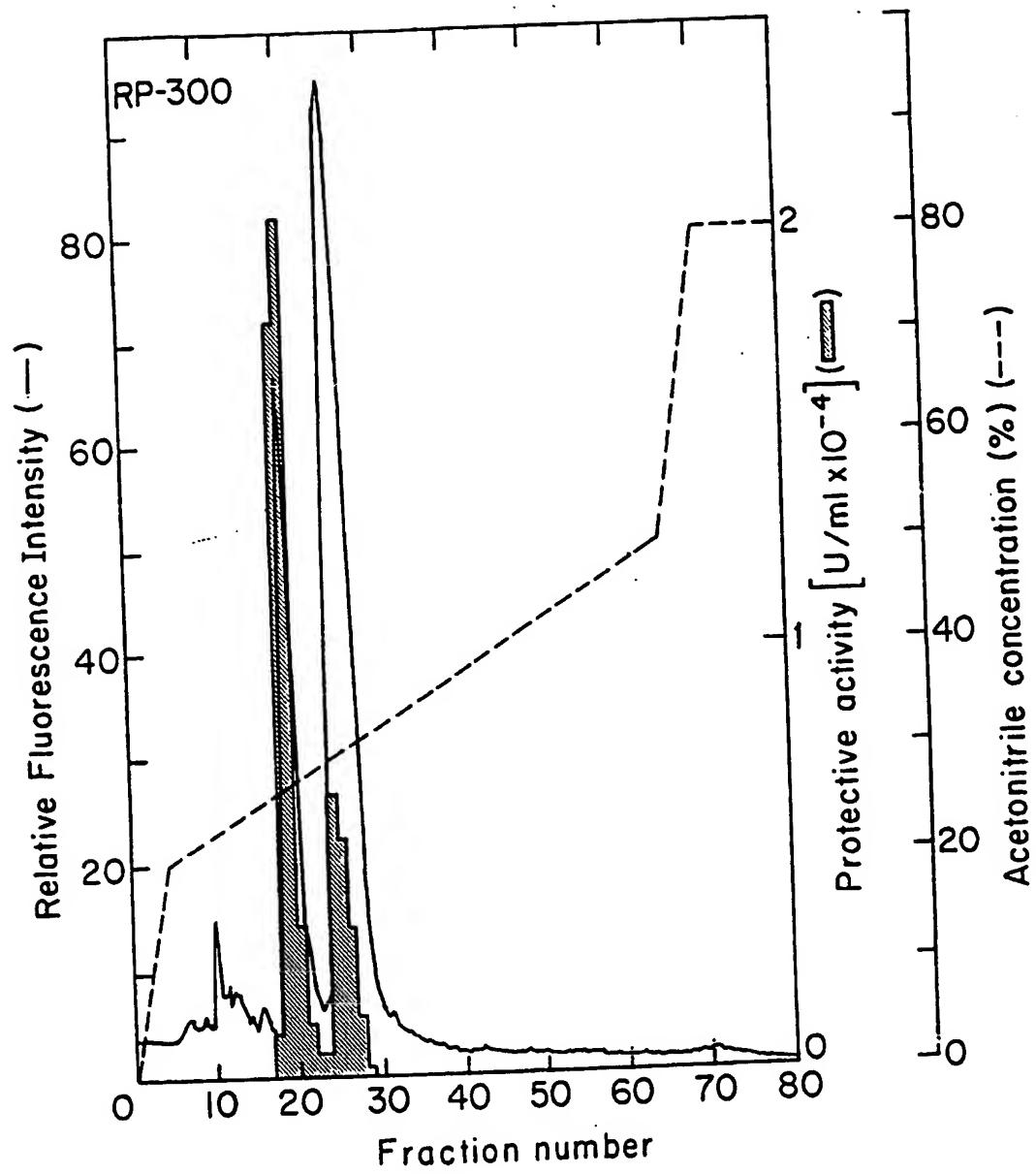


FIGURE 1

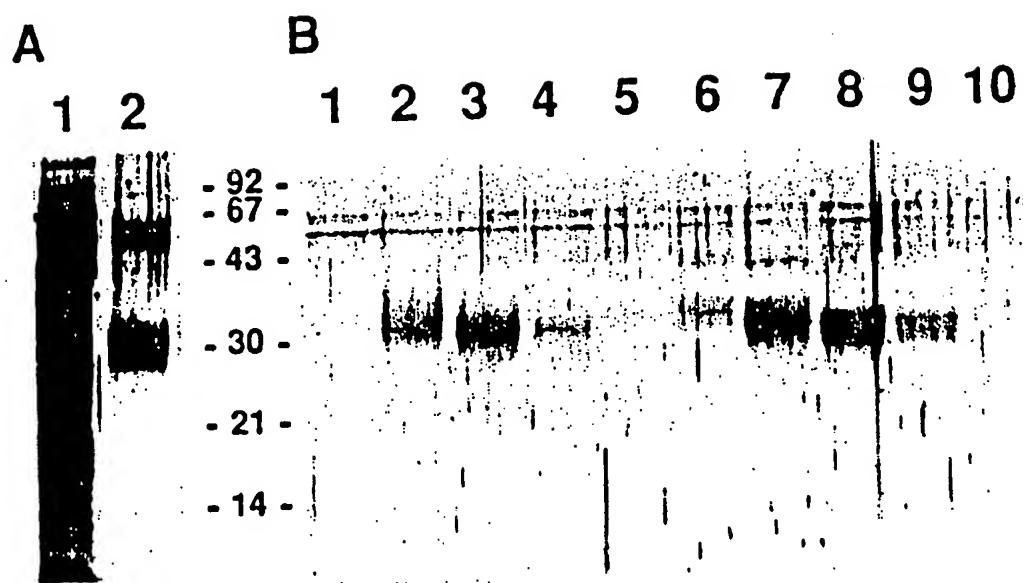


FIGURE 2

Sequence of TBP II peptides (tryptic digest purified on a C₁₈ column)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
fraction 44 ¹	Tyr	Tyr	Asp	Gln	Thr	Ala	Gln	Met	Cys	Cys									
fraction 50 ¹	Leu	Arg	Val	Tyr	Tyr	Asp	Ala	Thr	Ala	Gln	Met	Cys	Cys						
fraction 53 ²	Val	Ala	Phe	Thr	Pro	Tyr	Ala	Pro	Glu	Pro	Gly	Ser	Thr	Cys	Cys				
fraction 53 ³	Cys	Arg	Pro	Gly	Phe	Gly	Val	Ala	Arg										
fraction 60	Ile	Cys	Thr	Cys	Arg	Pro	Gly	Trp	Tyr	Cys	Ala	Pro	Leu						
fraction 84:	Thr	Ser	Asp	Thr	Val	Cys	Asp	Ser	Cys	Glu	Asp	Ser	Thr	Tyr	Thr	Gln	Leu	Trp	

1 the sequences of the peptide in fraction 44 fully overlaps with the sequence of the peptide in fraction 50

both sequences represent the extension of the N-terminal sequence described for the intact TBP II
 2 The sequence of the peptide found in fraction 53 fully overlaps with the N-terminal sequence described for the intact TBP II

FIGURE 3

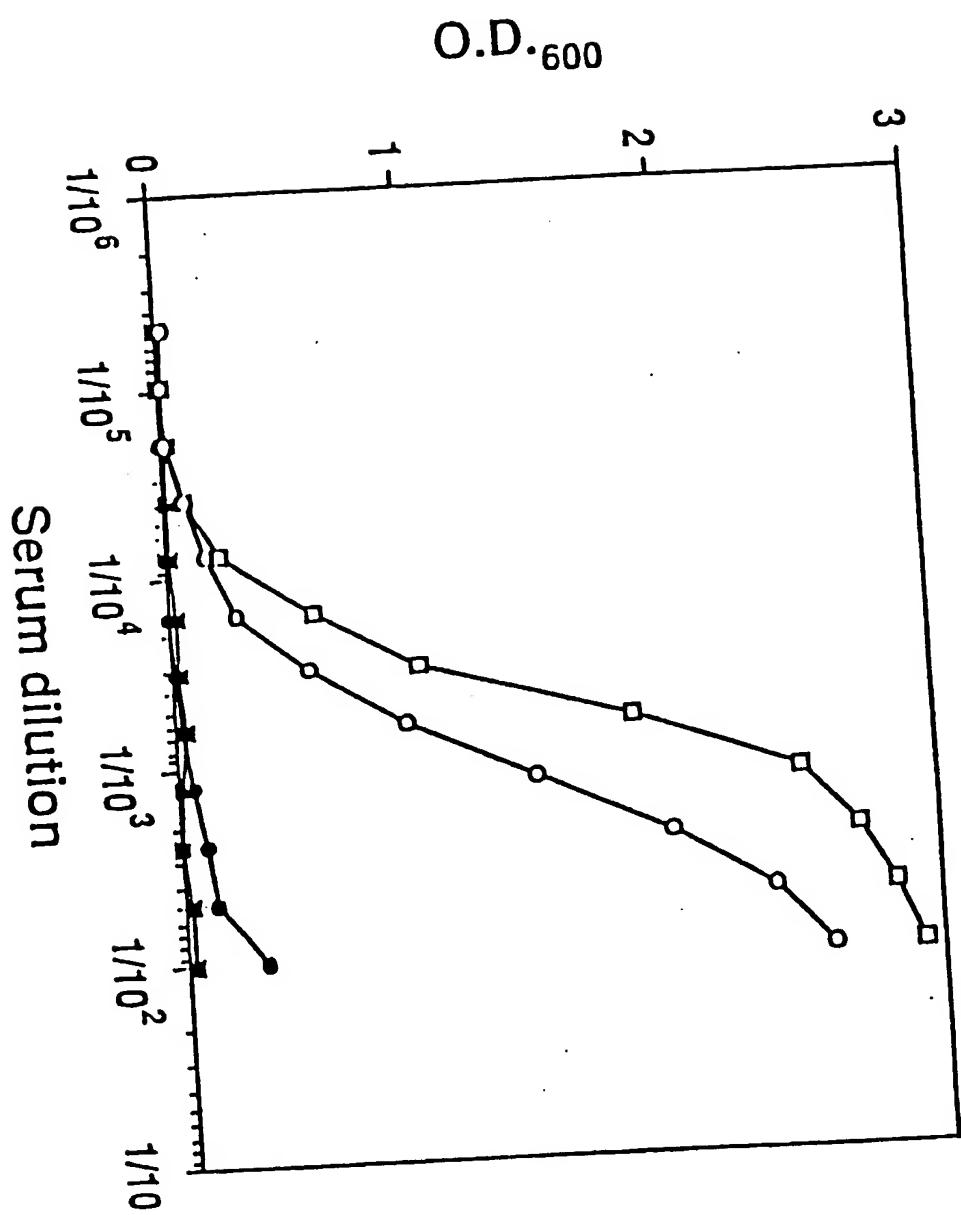


FIGURE 4

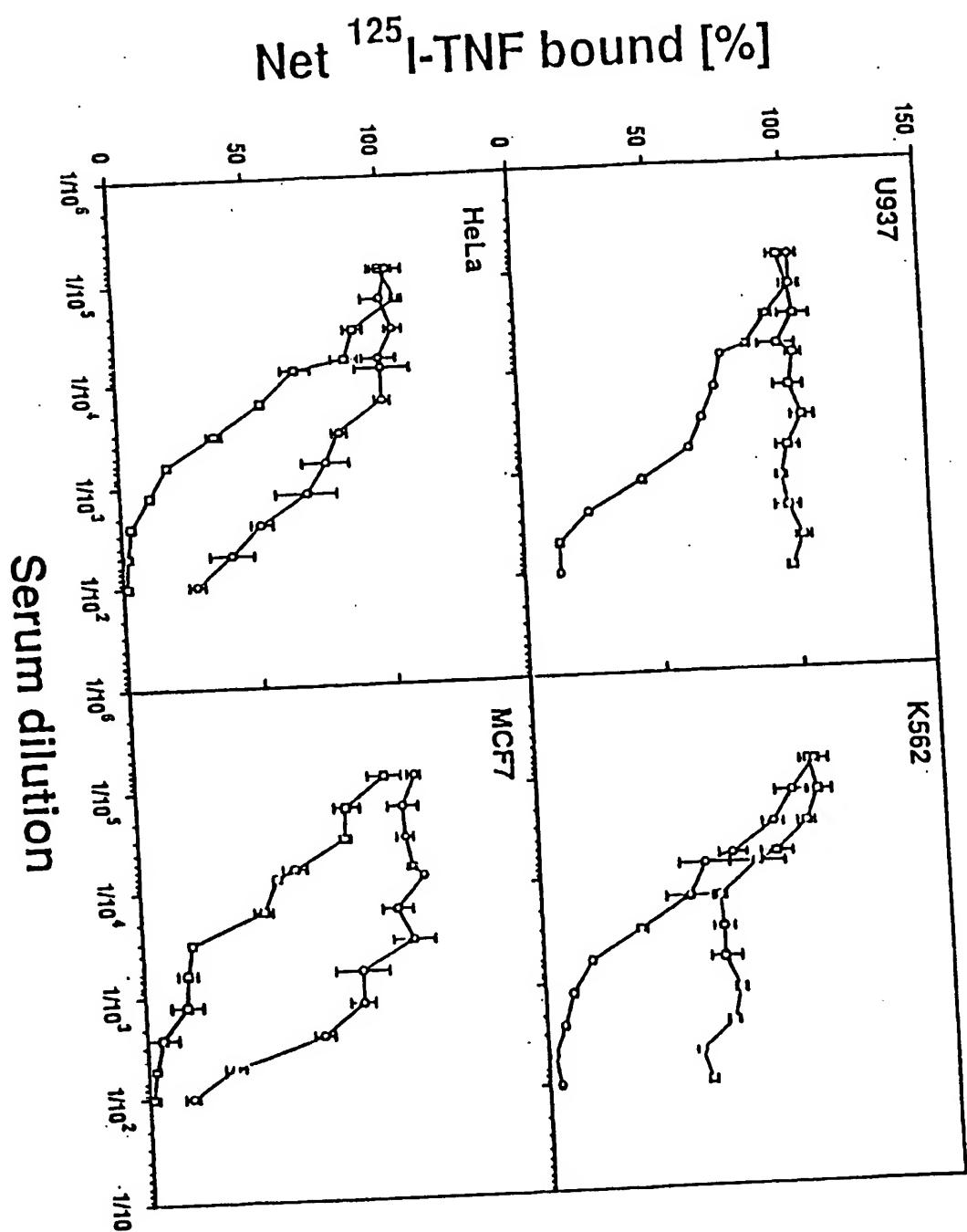


FIGURE 5

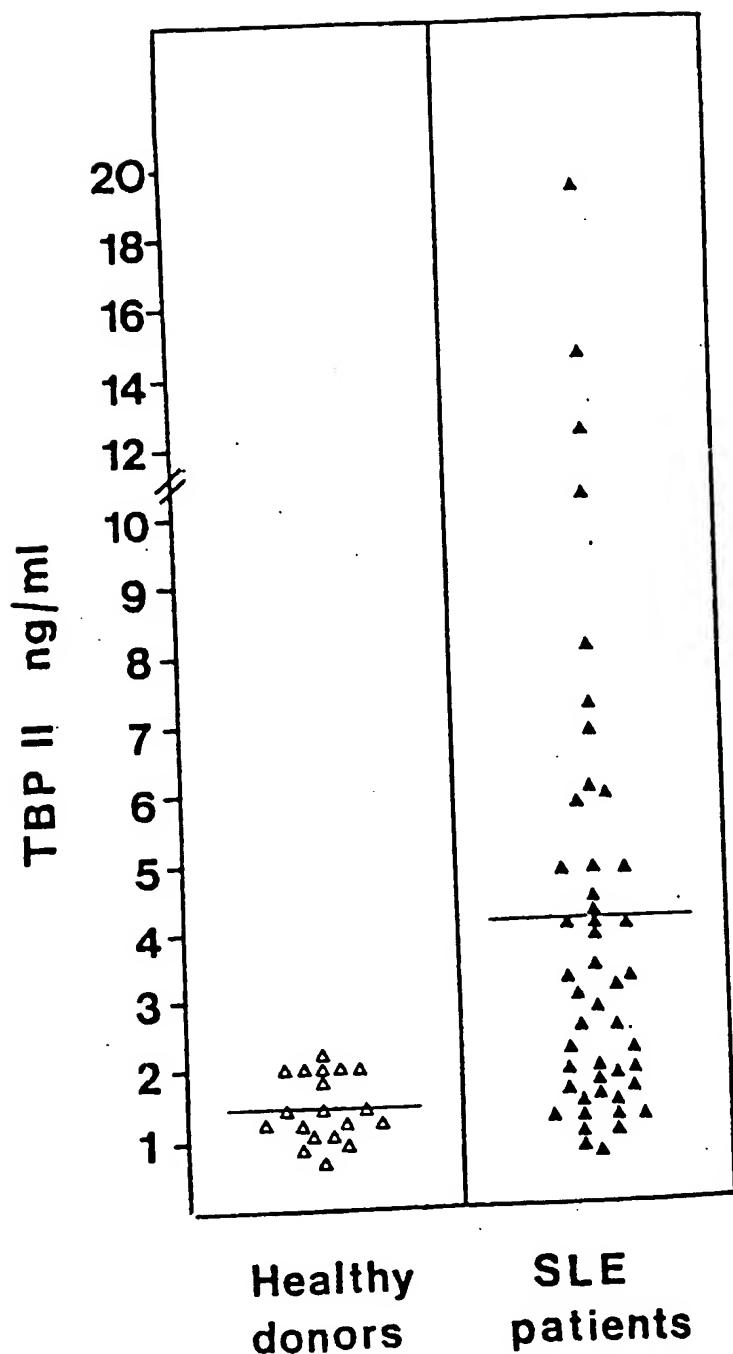


FIGURE 6

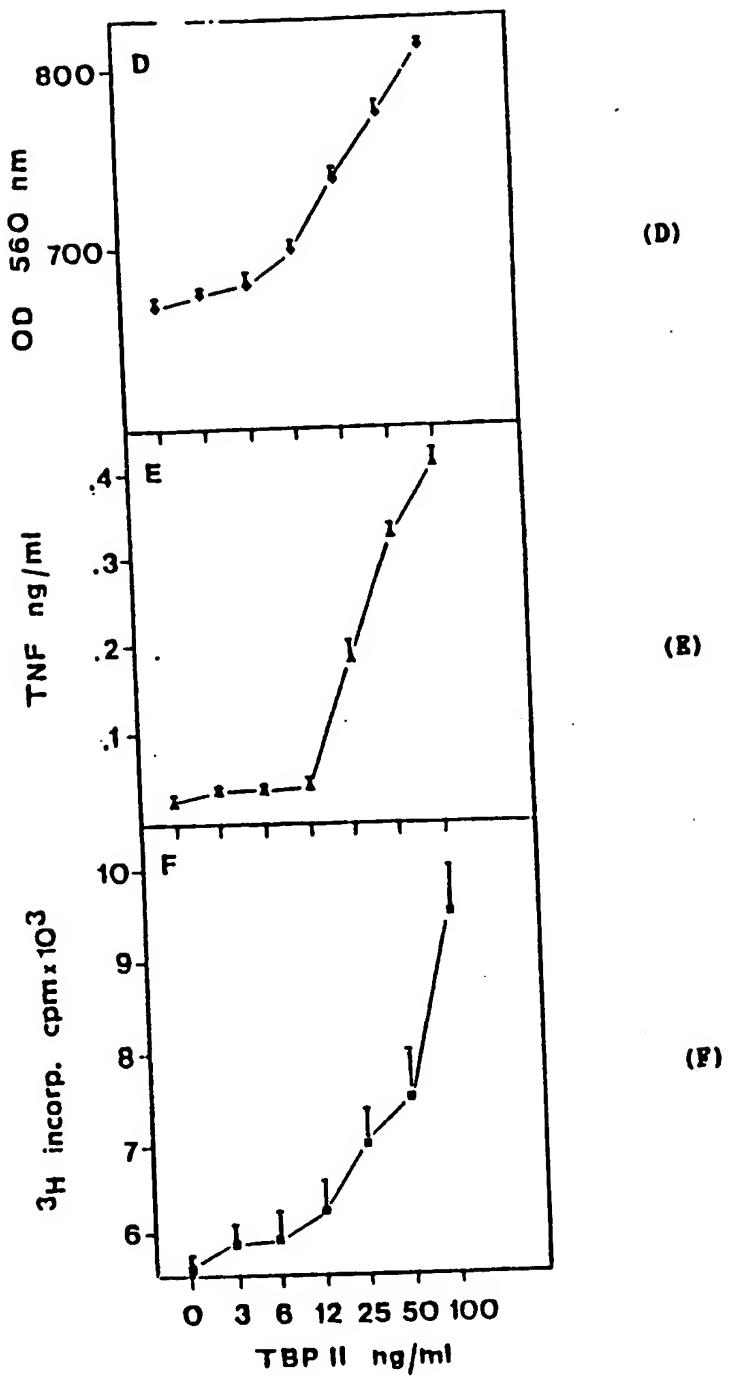
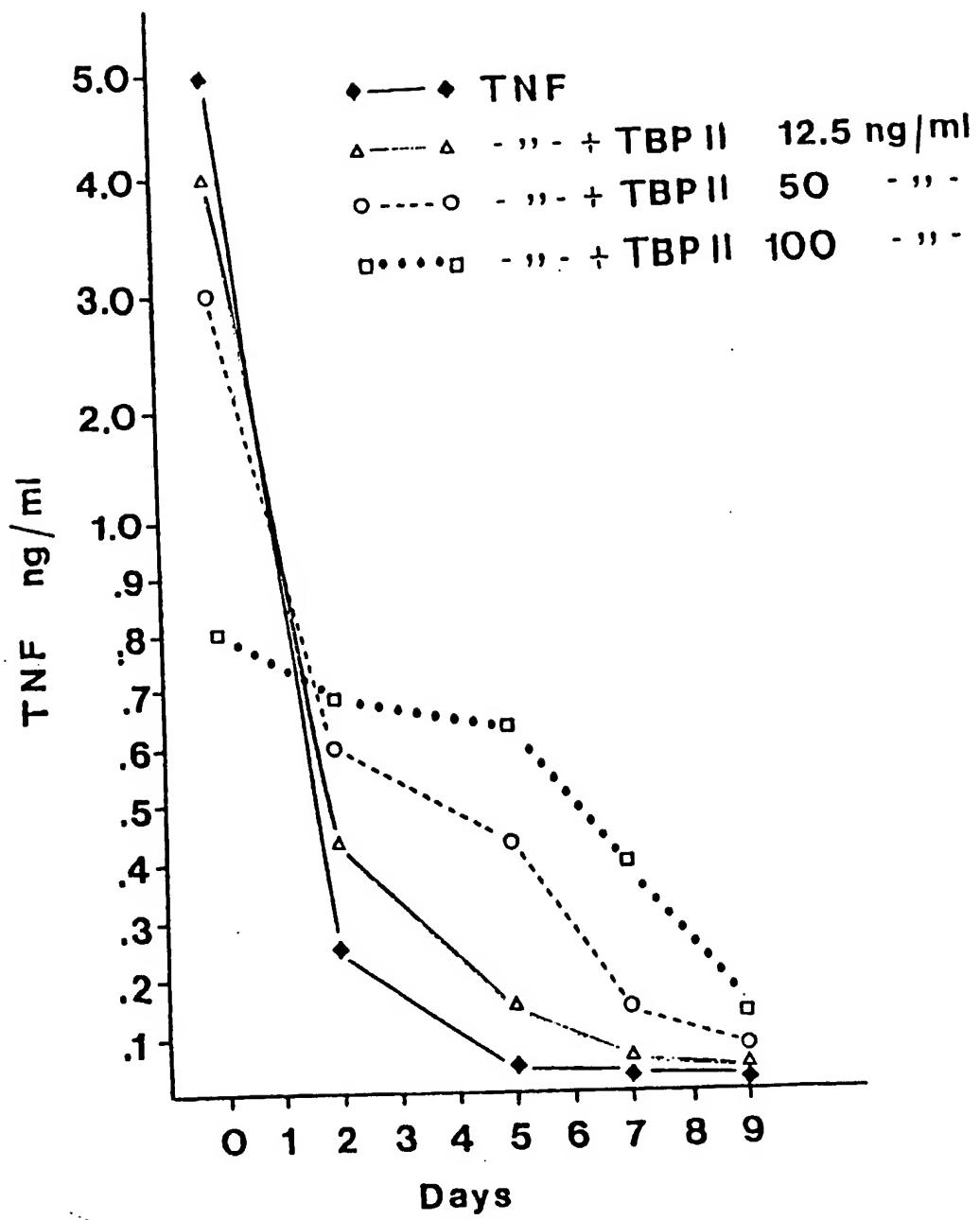


FIGURE 7

FIGURE 8